# A JOVIALL CREW: OR THE Merry Beggars.

Presented in a

# COMEDIE,

AT

The Cock-pit in *Drury-Lane*, in the Year 1641.

And since, acted by His MAJESTIES Servants, at the *New Theatre* in *Vere*-Street, 1661.

Written by

RICHARD BROME.

Mart. *Hic totus volo rideat Libellus.*

LONDON,
Printed for *Henry Brome* at the Gun in *Ivy-lane*, 1661.

# To the Right Noble, Ingenious, and Judicious Gentleman, THOMAS STANLEY, Esq;

SIR,

I Have, long since, studied in these anti-ingenious Times, to find out a Man that might, at once, be both a Judge and Patron to this Issue of my Old Age, which needs both. And my blessed Stars have flung me upon You: In whom both those Attributes Concentre and Flourish: Nor can I yet find a reason, why I should present it to You (it being below your Acceptance or Censure) but only my own Confidence; which had not grown to this Forwardnesse, had it not been incouraged by your Goodnesse. Yet we all know, Beggars use to flock to great mens Gates. And, though my Fortune has cast me in that Mold, I am poor and proud; and preserve the humour of him, who could not beg for any thing, but great Boones, such, as are your kind Acceptance and Protection. I dare not say (as my Brethren use) that I present this, as a Testimonial of my Gratitude or Recompence for your Favours: For (I protest) I conceive it so far from quitting old Engagements, that it creates new. So that, all, that this Play can do, is but to make more Work; and involves me in Debts, beyond a possibility of Satisfaction. Sir, it were a folly in me, to tell you of your Worth, the World knows it enough; and are bold to say, Fortune and Nature scarce ever club'd so well. You know, Sir, I am old, and cannot Cringe, nor Court, with the powder'd and ribbanded Wits of our dayes: But, though I cannot speak so much, I can think as well, and as honourably as the best. All the Arguments I can use to induce you to take notice of this thing of nothing, is, that it had the luck to tumble last of all in the Epidemicall ruine of the Scene; and now limps hither with a Wooden Leg, to beg an Almes at your hands. I will winde up all, with a Use of Exhortation, That since the Times conspire to make us all Beggars, let us make our selves merry; which (if I am not mistaken) this drives at. Be pleased therefore, Sir, to lodge these harmlesse Beggars in the Out-houses of your thoughts; and, among the rest, Him, that in this Cuckoe time, puts in for a Membership, and will fill the Choyre of those, that Duly and truly pray for you, and is,

SIR,

Your humble Servant

RICH: BROME.

## To Master *Richard Brome*, on his *Play*, called, *A Jovial Crew: or, The Merry BEGGARS.*

PLayes are *inſtructive* Recreations;
Which, who would write, may not expect, at once,
No, nor with every *breeding*, to write well.
And, though ſome itching Academicks fell
Lately upon this Task, their Products were
Lame and imperfect; and did *grate* the eare,
So, that they mock'd the ſtupid Stationers care,
That both with *Guelt* and Cringes did prepare
Fine Copper-Cuts; and gather'd Verſes too,
To make a Shout before the idle Show.
Your *Fate* is other: You do not invade;
But by great *Johnſon* were made free o'th' *Trade*.
So, that we muſt in this your *Labour* find
Some Image and fair Relique of *his* Mind.

*JOHN HALL.*

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## To Master *Richard Brome*, on his Comedie of *A Jovial Crew: or, The Merry BEGGARS.*

NOt to Commend, or Cenſure *thee*, or *thine*;
Nor like a Buſh, to ſignifie good *Wine*;
Nor yet to publiſh to the World; or *Thee*,
Thou merit'ſt Bayes by Wit and *Poetry*,
Do I ſtand here. Though I do know there comes
A Shole, with Regiments of *Encomiums*,
On all occaſions, whoſe *Aſtronomie*
Can calculate a Praiſe to *Fifty three*,
And write blank Copies, ſuch, as being view'd,
May ſerve indifferently each *Altitude*;
And make Books, like Petitions, whoſe Commands
Are not from Worth, but multitude of Hands:
Thoſe will prove Wit by power, and make a Trade,
To force by number when they can't perſwade.
Here's no ſuch need: For *Books*, like Children, be
Well chriſt'ned, when their Sureties are but three.
And thoſe, which to twelve Godfathers do come,
Signifie former Guilt, or ſpeedy Doom.
Nor need the *Stationer*, when all th'*Wits* are paſt,
To his own *Periwig Poetry* at laſt.

All this won't do: For, when their Labour's done,
The Reader's rul'd, not by their rafts, but's own.
And he, that for *Encomiaſticks* looks,
May find the bigger, not the better *Books*.
So, that the moſt our *Leavers* ſerve for, ſhews
Only that we're his Friends, and do ſuppoſe
'Tis good: And that is all, that I ſhall ſay.
In truth *I love him well, and like his Play.*
And if there's any, that don't think ſo too:
Let them let it alone for them that do.

*J. B.*

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## To his worthy Friend Maſter *Richard Brome*, upon his Comedie, called, *A Joviall Crew: or, The Merry Beggars.*

THis *Comedie* (ingenious Friend) will raiſe
It ſelf a Monument, without a Praiſe
Begg'd by the *Stationer*; who, with ſtrength of Purſe
And Pens, takes care, to make his *Book* ſell worſe.
And I dare calculate thy *Play*, although
Not elevated unto *Fifty two.*
It may grow old as Time or Wit; and he,
That dares deſpiſe, may after envy thee.
*Learning* the File of *Poeſie* may be
Fetch'd from the *Arts* and *Univerſitie*:
But he that writes a *Play*, and good, muſt know,
Beyond his Books, Men, and their Actions too.
Copies of Verſe, that make the *New Men* ſweat,
Reach not a *Poem*, nor the *Muſes* heat;
Small Bavine-Wits, and Wood, may burn a while,
And make more noiſe, then Forreſts on a Pile,
Whoſe Fivers ſhrunk, ma' invite a piteous ſtream;
Not to lament, but to extinguiſh them.
Thy *Fancie's* Mettall; and thy ſtrain's much higher
Proof 'gainſt their *Wit*, and what that dreads, the *Fire.*

*Ja. Shirley.*

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## To my worthy Friend Maſter *Richard Brome*, on his Excellent Play, called, *A Joviall Crew: or, The Merry Beggars.*

THere is a Faction (Friend) in Town, that cries,
Down with the *Dagon-Poet*, *Johnſon* dies.
His Works were too elaborate, not fit
To come within the Verge, or face of *Wit.*

*Beaumont* and *Fletcher* ( they ſay ) perhaps, might
Paſſe ( well ) for currant Coin, in a dark night:
But *Shakeſpear* the *Plebean* Driller, was
Founder'd in's *Pericles*, and muſt not paſs.
And ſo, at all men flie, that have but been
Thought worthy of applauſe; therefore, their ſpleen,
Ingratefull *Negro-kinde*, dart you your Rage
Againſt the Beams that warm'd you, and the Stage!
This malice, ſhews it is unhallowed heat,
That boyles your Raw-brains, and your Temples beat.
Adulterate Pieces may retain the Mold,
Or Stamp, but want the pureneſſe of the Gold:
But the World's mad, thoſe Jewels that were worn
In high eſteem, by ſome, laid by in ſcorn;
Like *Indians*, who their Native Wealth deſpiſe,
And doat on Stranger's Traſh, and Trumperies,
Yet, if it be not too far ſpent, there is
Some hopes left us, that this, thy well wrought Piece,
May bring it Cure, reduce it to its ſight,
To judge th' difference 'twixt the Day, and Night;
Draw th' Curtain of their Errours: that their ſenſe
May be conformable to *Ben*'s Influence;
And finding here, *Nature* and *Art* agree,
May ſwear, thou liv'ſt in Him, and he in Thee.

*Jo. Tatham.*

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## To Maſter *Richard Brome*, upon his Comedie, called, *A Joviall Crew: or, The Merry Beggars.*

SOmthing I'd ſay, but not to *praiſe* thee ( Friend )
For thou thy ſelf, doſt beſt thy ſelf commend.
And he that with an *Eulogie* doth come,
May to's own *Wit* raiſe an Encomium,
But not to *thine*. Yet I'll before thee go,
Though *Whiffler*-like to uſher in the *Shew*.
And like a *Quarter Clock*, foretell the time
Is come about for greater *Bells* to *chime*.
I muſt not praiſe thy *Poetry*, nor *Wit*,
Though both are very *good*; yet that's not it.
The *Reader* in his progreſſe will find more
Wit in a *line*, than I praiſe in a *ſcore*.
I ſhall be read with prejudice, for each *line*
I write of thee, or any thing that's thine,
Be't *Name*, or *Muſe*, will all be read of me,
As if I claw'd my ſelf, by praiſing thee.

But

But though I may not *praiſe*; I hope I may
Be bold to *love* thee. And the *World* ſhall ſay
I've *reaſon* for't *I love thee* for thy *Name*;
*I love thee* for thy *Merit*, and thy *Fame*:
*I love thee* for thy *neat* and *harmleſſe wit*,
Thy *Mirth* that does ſo *clean* and *cloſely hit*.
Thy *luck* to *pleaſe* ſo well: Who could go faſter?
At firſt to be the *Envy* of thy *Maſter*.
*I love thee* for thy *ſelf*; for who can chuſe
But like the *Fountain* of ſo briſk a *Muſe*?
*I love* this *Comedie*, and every *line*,
Becauſe 'tis *good*, as well's becauſe 'tis *thine*.
Thou tell'ſt the *World*, the life that *Beggars* lead,
'Tis *ſeaſonable*, 'twill become our *Trade*.
'T muſt be our *ſtudy* too; for in this *time*
Who'll not be innocent, ſince *Wealth*'s a *Crime*?
Thou'rt th' *Ages* Doctor now; for ſince *all* go
To make us *poor*, thou mak'ſt us *merry* too.
Go on, and thrive; *may* all thy *ſportings* be
Delightfull unto all, as th'are to *me*.
*May* this ſo *pleaſe*. t' encourage thee, that more
May be made *publick*, which thou keep'ſt in *ſtore*.
That though we've loſt their Dreſſe; we may be glad
To ſee and think on th' happineſſe we had.
And thou thereby may'ſt make *our Name* to ſhine;
'Twas *Royal* once; but now 'twill be Divine.

ALEX. BROME.

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## Prologue.

*THe Title of our* Play, *A Jcviall Crew,*
*May ſeem to promiſe Mirth: Which were a new,*
*And forc'd thing, in theſe ſad and tragick dayes;*
*For you to finde, or we expreſſe in* Playes.
*We wiſh you, then, would change that expectation,*
*Since Joviall Mirth is now grown out of faſhion.*
*Or much not to expect: For, now it chances,*
*(Our Comick Writer finding that* Romances
*Of Lovers, through much travell and diſtreſſe,*
*Till it be thought, no Power can redreſſe*
*Th' afflicted Wanderers, though ſtout Chevalry*
*Lend all his aid for their delivery;*
*Till, laſtly, ſome impoſſibility*
*Concludes all ſtrife, and makes a* Comedy.)
*Finding (he ſayes) ſuch Stories bear the ſway,*
*Near as he could, he has compos'd a* Play,

*of*

*Of* Fortune-tellers, Damsels, *and their* Squires,
*Expos'd to strange Adventures, through the Briers*
*Of* Love *and* Fate. *But why need I foreſtall*
*What ſhall ſo ſoon be obvious to you all:*
*But wiſh the dulneſſe may make no Man ſleep,*
*Nor ſadneſſe of it any Woman weep.*

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## The Perſons of the Play.

*Oldrents*, an antient Eſquire.
*Hearty*, his Friend, and merry Companion, but a decay'd Gentleman.
*Springlove*, Steward to Maſter *Oldrents*.
*Vincent*, *Hilliard*, } two young Gentlemen.
*Randall*, a Groom, Servant to *Oldrents*.
Maſter *Sentwell*, and two other Gentlemen, } Friends to Juſtice *Clack*.
*Oliver* the Juſtices Son.
Maſter *Clack*, the Juſtice himſelf.
Maſter *Talboy*, Lover to the Juſtices Neece.
*Martin*, the Juſtices Cleark.
*Chaplain*, *Uſher*, *Butler*, *Cook*, } to *Oldrents*.
*Rachel*, *Meriel*, } *Oldrent's* Daughters.
*Amie*, Juſtice *Clack's* Neece.
*Autum-Mort*, an old *Beggar-woman*.
*Patrico*, *Souldier*, *Lawyer*, *Courtier*, } Four eſpeciall *Beggars*.
*Scribble*, their *Poet*.
Divers other *Beggars*, *Fidlers*, and *Mutes*.

# A JOVIAL CREW:
## OR,
## The Merry Beggars.

*Actus Primus.*

*Oldrents. Hearty.*

*Old.* IT has indeed, Friend, much afflicted me.

*Hea.* And very juſtly, let me tell you, Sir,
That could ſo impiouſly be curious
To tempt a judgement on you; to give ear,
And Faith too (by your leave) to *Fortune-tellers*,
*Wizards* and *Gipſies*.

*Old.* I have ſince been frighted
With't in a thouſand dreams.

*Hea.* I would be drunk
A thouſand times to bed, rather then dream
Of any of their *Riddlemy Riddlemies*.
If they prove happie ſo: If not, let't go;
You'll never finde their meaning, till the event,
If you ſuppoſe there was, at all, a meaning,
As the equivocating Devil had, when he
Coſen'd the Monk, to let him live ſoul-free,
Till he ſhould find him ſleeping between ſheets:
The warie Monk, abjuring all ſuch lodging,
At laſt, by over-watching in his ſtudie,
The foul Fiend took him napping with his noſe
Betwixt the ſheet-leaves of his conjuring Book.
There was the *whim*, or double meaning on't.
But theſe fond *Fortune-tellers*, that know nothing,
Aim to be thought more cunning then their Maſter,
The foreſaid Devil, tho' truly not ſo hurtfull:
Yet, truſt 'em! hang 'em. *Wizards!* old blinde Buzzards!

For once they hit, they miſs a thouſand times;
And moſt times give quite contrary, bad for good,
And beſt for worſt. One told a Gentleman
His ſon ſhould be a man-killer, and hang'd for't;
Who, after prov'd a great and rich Phyſician,
And with great Fame ith' Univerſity
Hang'd up in picture for a grave example.
There was the *whim* of that. Quite contrary!

*Old.* And that was happy, would mine could ſo deceive my fears.

*Hea.* They may: but truſt not to't. Another *Schemiſt*
Found, that a ſquint-ey'd boy ſhould prove a notable
Pick-purſe, and afterwards a moſt ſtrong thief;
When he grew up to be a cunning Lawyer,
And at laſt died a Judge. Quite contrary!
How many have been mark'd out by theſe *Wizards*
For fools, that after have been prick'd for Sheriffs?
Was not a Shepheard boy foretold to be
A Drunkard, and to get his living from
Bawds, Whores, Thieves, Quarrellors and the like?
And did he not become a Suburbe *Juſtice*?
And live in Wine and Worſhip by the Fees
Rack'd out of ſuch Delinquents? There's the *whim* on't.
Now I come to you: Your *Figure-flinger* finds,
That both your Daughters, notwithſtanding all
Your great Poſſeſſions, which they are Co-heirs of,
Shall yet be *Beggars*: May it not be meant,
(If, as I ſaid, there be a meaning in it)
They may prove *Courtiers*, or great Courtiers wives,
And ſo be Beggars in Law? Is not that the *whim* on't think you? you ſhall think no worſe on't.

*Old.* Would I had your merry heart.

*Hea.* I thank you, Sir.

*Old.* I mean the like.

*Hea.* I would you had; and I
Such an Eſtate as yours. Four thouſand yearly,
With ſuch a heart as mine, would defie *Fortune*,
And all her babling *Sooth-ſayers*. I'de as ſoon
Diſtruſt in *Providence*, as lend a fear
To ſuch a *Deſtiny*, for a Child of mine,

While there be Sack and Songs in Town or Country.
Think like a man of conſcience ( now I am ſerious )
What juſtice can there be for ſuch a curſe
To fall upon your Heirs? Do you not live
Free, out of Law, or grieving any man?
Are you not th' only rich man lives un-envied?
Have you not all the praiſes of the *Rich*,
And prayers of the *Poor*? Did ever any
Servant, or Hireling, Neighbour, Kindred, curſe you,
Or wiſh one minute ſhorten'd of your life?
Have you one grudging Tenant? will they not all
Fight for you? Do they not teach their Children,
And make 'em too, pray for you morn and evening,
And in their Graces too, as duly as
For King and Realm? The innocent things would think
They ought not eat elſe.

*Old.* 'Tis their goodneſſe.

*Hea.* It is your merit. Your great love and bounty
Procures from *Heaven* thoſe inſpirations in 'em.
Whoſe Rent did ever you exact? whoſe have
You not remitted, when by caſuelties
Of fire, of floods, of common dearth, or ſickneſſe,
Poor men were brought behind hand? Nay, whoſe loſſes
Have you not piouſlie repair'd?

*Old.* Enough.

*Hea.* What Hariots have you tane from forlorn Widows?
What Acre of your thouſands have you rack'd?

*Old.* Good Friend no more.

*Hea.* Theſe are enough, indeed,
To fill your ears with joyful acclamations
Where e're you paſs; Heaven bleſs our Landlord *Oldrent*.
Our Maſter *Oldrent*; our good Patron *Oldrent*.
Cannot theſe ſounds conjure that evil ſpirit
Of fear out of you, that your Children ſhall
Live to be *Beggars*? Shall Squire *Oldrent*'s Daughters
Wear old rents in their Garments? ( there's a *whim* too )
Becauſe a *Fortune-teller* told you ſo?

*Old.* Come, I will ſtrive to think no more on't.

*Hea.* Will you ride forth for air then, and be merry?

*Old.* Your counſel and example may inſtruct me.

*Hea.* Sack must be had in sundry places too,
For Songs I am provided.

*Enter* Springlove *with Books and Papers, he lays them on the Table.*

*Old.* Yet here comes one brings me a second fear,
Who has my care the next unto my children.
*Hea.* Your Steward, Sir, it seems has business with you.
I wish you would have none.
*Old* I'll soon dispatch it:
And then be for our journey instantlie.
*Hea.* I'll wait your comming down, Sir. *Exit.*
*Old.* But why, *Springlove*,
Is now this expedition?
*Spr.* Sir, 'Tis duty.
*Old.* Not common among Stewards, I confess,
To urge in their Accompts before the day
Their Lords have limited. Some that are grown
To hoary haires and Knighthoods, are not found
Guilty of such an importunity.
'Tis yet but thirtie daies, when I give fortie
After the half-year day, our *Lady* last.
Could I suspect my Trust were lost in thee;
Or doubt thy youth had not abilitie
To carry out the weight of such a charge,
I, then, should call on thee.
*Spr.* Sir, your indulgence,
I hope, shall ne'r corrupt me. Nevertheless,
The testimony of a fair discharge
From time to time, will be incouragement

Springlove *turns over the several Books to his Master.*

To virtue in me. You may then be pleas'd
To take here a Survey of all your Rents
Receiv'd, and all such other payments, as
Came to my hands since my last Audit, for
Cattel, Wool, Corn, all Fruits of Husbandrie.
Then, my Receipts and Bonds, and some new Leases,
With some old debts, and almost desperate ones,
As well from Countrie Cavaliers, as Courtiers.
Then, here sir, are my several Disbursements,

In

In all particulars for your ſelf and Daughters,
In charge of Houſe-keeping, Buildings and Repairs,
Journeys, Apparel, Coaches, Gifts and all
Expences for your perſonal neceſſaries.
Here, Servants wages, Liveries, and cures.
Here for ſupplies of horſes, hawks and hounds.
And laſtly, not the leaſt to be remembred,
Your large Benevolence to the poor.
*Old.* Thy charitie there goes hand in hand with mine.
And, *Springlove*, I commend it in thee, that
So young in years art grown ſo ripe in goodneſſe.
May their Heaven-piercing Prayers bring on thee
Equall rewards with me,
*Spr.* Now here, Sir, is
The ballance of the ſeveral Accompts,
Which ſhews you what remains in Caſh: which added
Unto your former Banck, makes up in all——
*Old.* Twelve thouſand and odd pounds.
*Spr.* Here are the keys
Of all. The Cheſts are ſafe in your own Cloſet.
*Old.* Why in my Cloſet? is not yours as ſafe?
*Spr.* O, Sir, you know my ſuit.
*Old.* Your ſuit? what ſuit?
Spr. Touching the time of year.
*Old.* 'Tis well-nigh *May*.
VVhy what of that, good *Springlove*. *Nightingale ſings.*
*Spr.* O, Sir you hear I am call'd.
*Old.* Fie *Springlove*, fie.
I hop'd thou hadſt abjur'd that uncough practice.
*Spr.* You thought I had forſaken *Nature* then.
*Old.* Is that diſeaſe of nature ſtill in thee
So virulent? and, notwithſtanding all
My favours, in my gifts, my cares, and counſels,
VVhich to a ſoul ingrateful might be boaſted:
Have I firſt bred thee, and then preferr'd thee (from
I will not ſay how wretched a beginning)
To be a Maſter over all my Servants;
Planted thee in my boſom; and canſt thou,
There, ſlight me for the whiſtling of a Bird?
*Spr.* Your reaſon, Sir, informs you, that's no cauſe.

But 'tis the ſeaſon of the year that calls me.
VVhat moves her Noats, provokes my diſpoſition
By a more abſolute power of *Nature*, then
Philoſophie can render an account for.
*Old.* I find there's no expelling it; but ſtill
It will return. I have try'd all the means
(As I may ſafely think) in humane wiſdom,
And did (as near as reaſon could) aſſure me,
That thy laſt years reſtraint had ſtopp'd for ever,
That running ſore on thee, that gadding humour:
When, only for that cauſe, I laid the weight
Of mine Eſtate in Stewardſhip upon thee;
Which kept thee in that year, after ſo many
Sommer vagaries thou hadſt made before.
*Spr.* You kept a Swallow in a Cage that while.
I cannot, Sir, indure another Sommer
In that reſtraint, with life: 'twas then my torment,
But now, my death: Yet, Sir, my life is yours:
Who are my Patron; freely may you take it.
Yet pardon, Sir, my frailty, that do beg
A ſmall continuance of it on my knees.
*Old.* Can there no means be found to preſerve life
In thee, but wandring, like a Vagabond?
Do:s not the Sun as comfortably ſhine
Upon my Gardens, as the opener Fields?
Or on my Fields, as others far remote?
Are not my Walks and Greens as delectable
As the High-ways and C)mmons? Are the ſhades
Of *Siccamore* and Bowers of *Eglantine*
Leſs pleaſing then of Bramble, or thorne hedges?
Or of my Groves and Thickets, then wild Woods?
Are not my Fountain waters freſher then
The troubled ſtreams, where every Beaſt does drink?
Do not the Birds ſing here as ſweet and lively,
As any other where? is not thy bed more ſoft,
And reſt more ſafe, then in a Field or Barn?
Is a full Table, which is call'd thine own,
L-ſs curious or wholſom, then the ſcraps
From others trenchers, twice or thrice tranſlated?
*Spr.* Yea, in the winter ſeaſon, when the fire

Is ſweeter then the air.

*Old.* What air is wanting?

*Spr.* O Sir, y'have heard of Pilgrimages; and
The voluntary travels of good men.

*Old.* For Pennance; or to holy ends? but bring
Not thoſe into compariſon, I charge you.

*Spr.* I do not, Sir. But pardon me, to think
Their ſufferings are much ſweetned by delights,
Such as we finde, by ſhifting place and air.

*Old.* Are there delights in beggary? Or, if to take
Diverſity of Air be ſuch a ſolace,
Travel the Kingdom over: And if this
Yeeld not variety enough, try further:
Provided your deportment be gentile.
Take Horſe, and Man, and Money: you have all,
Or I'll allow enough.

*Sing Nightingale, Cuckoe, &c.*

*Spr.* O how am I confounded!
Dear Sir, retort me naked to the world,
Rather then lay thoſe burdens on me, which
Will ſtifle me. I muſt abroad or periſh.

*Old.* I will no longer ſtrive to waſh this *Moor*;
Nor breath more minutes ſo unthriftily,
In civil argument, againſt rude winde,
But rather practiſe to withdraw my love
And tender care (if it be poſſible)
From that unfruitful breaſt; incaple
Of wholeſome counſel.

*Spr.* Have I your leave, Sir?

*Old.* I leave you to diſpute it with your ſelf.
I have no voice to bid you go, or ſtay:
My love ſhall give thy will preheminence;
And leave th'effect to Time and Providence--*Exit.*

*Spr.* I am confounded in my obligation
To this good man: His virtue is my puniſhment,
When 'tis not in my Nature to return
Obedience to his Merits. I could wiſh
Such an Ingratitude were Death by th'law,
And put in preſent execution on me,
To rid me of my ſharper ſuffering.
Nor but by death, can this predominant ſway

Of

Of nature be extinguish'd in me. I
Have fought with my Affections, by th'assistance
Of all the strengths of Art and Discipline
(All which I owe him for in education too)
To conquer and establish my observance
(As in all other rules) to him in this.
This inborn strong desire of liberty
In that free course, which he detests as shamefull,
And I approve my earths felicity:
But finde the war is endless, and must fly.
What must I lose then? A good Master's love.
What loss feels he that wants not what he loses?
They'l say I lose all Reputation.
What's that, to live where no such thing is known?
My dutie to a Master will be question'd.
Where dutie is exacted it is none:
And among *Beggars*, each man is his own.

*Enter* Randal *and three or four servants with a great Kettle, and black Jacks, and a Bakers Basket, all empty,* exeunt *with all,* manet *Randal.*

Now fellows, what news from whence you came?

*Ran.* The old wonted news, Sir, from your Guest-house, the old Barn. We have unloaden the Bread-basket, the Beef-Kettle, and the Beer-*Bumbards* there, amongst your Guests the Beggars. And they have all prayed for you and our Master, as their manner is, from the teeth outward, marrie from the teeth inwards 'tis enough to swallow your Alms; from whence I think their Prayers seldom come.

*Spr.* Thou should'st not think uncharitably.

*Ran.* Thought's free, Master Steward, and it please you. But your Charitie is nevertheless notorious, I must needs say.

*Spr.* Meritorious thou meantst to say.

*Ran.* Surelie Sir, no; 'tis out of our Curats Book.

*Spr.* But I aspire no merits, nor popular thanks,
'Tis well if I do well in it.

*Ran* It might be better though (if old *Randal*, whom you allow to talk, might counsel) to help to breed up poor mens

mens children, or decayed labourers, past their work, or travel; or towards the setting up of poor young maried couples; then to bestow an hundred pound a year (at least you do that, if not all you get) besides our Masters bounty, to maintain in begging such wanderers as these, that never are out of their way; that cannot give account from whence they came, or whither they would; nor of any beginning they ever had, or any end they seek, but still do strowle and beg till their bellies be full, and then sleep till they be hungry.

*Spr.* Thou art ever repining at those poor people! they take nothing from thee but thy pains: and that I pay thee thee for too. Why should'st thou grudge?

*Ran.* Am I not bitten to it every day, by the six-footed blood-hounds that they leave in their Litter, when I throw out the old, to lay fresh straw for the new comers at night. That's one part of my Office. And you are sure that though your hospitality be but for a night and a morning for one Rabble, to have a new supply every evening. They take nothing from me indeed, they give too much.

*Spr.* Thou art old *Randall* still! ever grumbling, but still officious for 'em.

*Ran.* Yes: hang 'em, they know I love 'em well enough, I have had merry bouts with some of 'em.

*Spr.* What say'st thou *Randall?*

*Ran.* They are indeed my pastime. I left the merry Griggs (as their provender has prickt 'em) in such a Hoigh younder! such a frollick! you'l hear anon, as you walk nearer 'em.

*Spr.* Well honest *Randal.* Thus it is. I am for a journey. I know not how long will be my absence. But I will presently take order with the Cook, Pantler and Butler, for my wonted allowance to the Poor; And I will leave mony with thee to manage the affair till my return.

*Ran.* Then up rise *Randal*, Bayley of the Beggars.

*Spr.* And if our Master shall be displeas'd (although the charge be mine) at the openess of the Entertainment, thou shalt then give it proportionably in money, and let them walk farther.

*Ran.* Pfeugh! that will never do't, never do 'em good: 'Tis the Seat, the Habitation, the Rendevous, that chears their hearts. Money would clog their Consciences. Nor

must I lose the musick of 'em in their lodging.

*Spr.* We will agree upon't anon. Go now about your business.

*Ran.* I go. Bayley? nay Steward and Chamberlain of the Rogues and Beggars. *Exit.*

*Spr.* I cannot think but with a trembling fear
On this adventure, in a scruple, which
I have not weighed with all my other doubts.
I shall, in my departure, rob my Master.
Of what? of a true Servant; other theft
I have committed none. And that may be supply'd,
And better too, by some more constant to him.
But I may injure many in his Trust,
Which now he cannot be but sparing of.
I rob him too, of the content and hopes
He had in me, whom he had built and rais'd
Unto what growth in his affection,
That I became a gladness in his eye,
And now must be a grief or a vexation
*A noyse and singing within.*
Unto his noble heart. But hearke! I there's
The Harmony that drowns all doubts and fears:
A little nearer——

## Song.

*FRom hunger and cold who lives more free,*
*Or who more richly clad than wee?*
*Our bellies are full; our flesh is warm;*
*And, against pride, our rags are a charm.*
*Enough is our Feast, and for to morrow*
*Let rich men care: we feel no sorrow.*
*No sorrow, no sorrow, no sorrow, no sorrow.*
*Let rich men care, we feel no sorrow.*

*Sp.* The Emperour hears no such musick; nor feels content like this!

*Each City, each Town, and every Village,*
*Affords us either an Alms or Pillage.*
*And if the weather be cold and raw*
*Then, in a Barn we tumble in straw.*
*If warm and fair, by yea-cock and nay-cock*
*The Fields will afford us a Hedge or a Hay-cock,*

*A Hay-cock, a Hay-cock, a Hay-cock, a Hay-cock,*
*The Fields will afford us a Hedge or a Hay-cock.*

*Spr.* Moſt raviſhing delight! But, in all this
Onely one ſenſe is pleas'd: mine ear is feaſted.
Mine eyes too muſt be ſatisfied with my joyes.
The hoarding Uſurer cannot have more
Thirſty deſire to ſee his golden ſtore,
When he unlocks his Treaſury, then I
The equipage in which my Beggars lye.

*He opens the Scene; the* Beggars *are diſcovered in their poſtures; then they iſſue forth; and laſt, the* Patrico.

*All.* Our Maſter, our Maſter! our ſweet and comfortable Maſter.

*Spr.* How chear my hearts?

1 *Beg.* Moſt crowſe, moſt capringly.
Shall we dance, ſhall we ſing, to welcome our King?
Strike up Piper a merry merry dance
That we on our ſtampers may foot it and prance,
To make his heart merry as he has made ours;
As luſtick and frolique as Lords in their Bowers.

*Muſick. Dance.*

*Spr.* Exceeding well perform'd.

1 *Beg.* 'Tis well if it like you, Maſter. But we have not that rag among us, that we will not daunce off, to do you ſervice; we being all and only your ſervants, moſt noble Sir. Commend us therefore and imploy us, we beſeech you.

*Spr.* Thou ſpeak'ſt moſt courtly.

2. *Beg.* Sir, he can ſpeak, and could have writ as well. He is a decay'd Poet, newly fallen in among us; and begs as well as the beſt of us. He learnt it pretty well in his own profeſſion before; and can the better practiſe it in ours now.

*Spr.* Thou art a wit too, it ſeems.

3 *Beg.* He ſhould have wit and knavery too, Sir; For he was an Attorney, till he was pitch'd over the Bar. And, from that fall, he was taken up a Knight o' the Poſt; and ſo he continued, till he was degraded at the whipping-poſt;

and from thence he ran resolutely into this course. His cunning in the Law, and the others labour with the *Muses* are dedicate to your service; and for my self, I'll fight for you.

*Spr.* Thou art a brave fellow, and speak'st like a Commander. Hast thou born Armes?

4 *Beg.* Sir, he has born the name of a *Netherland* Souldier, till he ran away from his Colours, and was taken lame with lying in the Fields by a *Sciatica*: I mean, Sir, the *strapado*. After which, by a second retreat, indeed running away, he scambled into his Country, and so escap'd the Gallows; and then snap'd up his living in the City by his wit in cheating, pimping, and such like Arts, till the Cart and the Pillory shewed him too publickly to the world. And so, begging being the last refuge, he enter'd into our Society. And now lives honestly, I must needs say as the best of us.

*Spr.* Thou speak'st good language too.

1 *Beg.* He was a Courtier born, Sir, and begs on pleasure I assure you, refusing great and constant means from able Friends to make him a staid man. Yet (the want of a legg notwithstanding) he must travel in this kinde against all common reason, by the special pollicy of Providence.

*Spr.* As how, I prethee?

1 *Beg.* His Father, Sir, was a Courtier; a great Court-Beggar I assure you;

I made these Verses of Him and his Son here.

A *Courtier* begg'd by Covetise, not Need,
From Others that, which made them beg indeed.
He begg'd, till wealth had laden him with cares
To keep for's Children and their Children shares:
While the oppress'd, that lost that great Estate
Sent Curses after it unto their *Fate*.
The Father dies (the world says) very rich;
The Son, being gotten while (it seems) the itch
Of begging was upon the Courtly Sire,
Or bound by Fate, will to no wealth aspire,
Tho' offer'd him in Money, Cloathes or Meat,
More than he begs, or instantly must eat.
Is not he Heavenly blest, that hates Earth's Treasure
And begs, with *What's a Gentleman but's pleasure?*

Or

Or say it be upon the Heir a curse;
What's that to him? The *Beggar's* ne'r the worse.
For of the general store that Heaven has sent
He values not a penny till't be spent.

*All.* A *Scribble*, a *Scribble*!

2 *Beg.* What City or Court Poet could say more than our Hedge Muse-monger here?

2 *Beg.* What say, Sir, to our Poet *Scribble* here?

*Spr.* I like his vain exceeding well; and the whole Consort of you.

2 *Beg.* Consort, Sir. We have *Musicians* too among us: true *merry Beggars* indeed, that being within the reach of the Lash for singing libellous Songs at *London*, were fain to flie into our Covie, and here they sing all our Poets Ditties. They can sing any thing most tunably, Sir, but Psalmes. What they may do hereafter under a triple Tree, is much expected. But they live very civilly and gentily among us.

*Spr.* But what is he there? that solemn old fellow, that neither speaks of himself, nor any body for him.

2 *Beg.* O Sir, the rarest man of all. He is a *Prophet*. See how he holds up his Prognosticating nose. He is divining now.

*Spr.* How? a *Prophet*?

2 *Beg.* Yes Sir, a cunning-man and a Fortune-teller: 'tis thought he was a great Clark before his decay, but he is very close, will not tell his beginning, nor the fortune he himself is false from: But he serves us for a Clergy-man still, and marries us, if need be, after a new way of his own.

*Spr.* How long have you had his company?

2 *Beg.* But lately come amongst us, but a very antient Strowle all the Land over, and has travell'd with *Gipsies*, and is a *Patrico*. Shall he read your Fortune Sir?

*Spr.* If it please him.

*Pat.* Lend me your hand, Sir.

*By this Palme I understand,*
*Thou art born to Wealth and Land,*
*And after many a bitter gust,*
*Shalt build with thy great Grandsires dust.*

*Spr.* Where shall I find it? but come, I'le not trouble my head with the search.

2 *Beg.* What ſay, Sir, to our Crew? are we not well congregated?

*Spr.* You are *A Jovial Crew*; the only people
Whoſe happineſs I admire.

3 *Beg.* Will you make us happy in ſerving you? have you any Enemies? ſhall we fight under you? will you be our Captain?

2 *Beg.* Nay, our King.

3 *Beg.* Command us ſomething, Sir.

*Spr.* Where's the next Rendevouz?

1 *Beg.* Neither in Village nor in Town:
But three mile off at *Maple-down*.

*Spr.* At evening there I'le viſit you.

Song.

*COme, come; away: The Spring*
*(By every Bird that can but ſing,*
*Or chirp a note) doth now invite*
*Us forth, to taſte of his delight.*
*In Field, in Grove, on Hill, in Dale,*
*But above all the* Nightingale:
*Who in her ſweetneſſe ſtrives t'out-doe*
*The loudneſs of the hoarſe* Cuckoe.
Cuckoe *cries he,* Jug Jug Jug *ſings ſhe,*
*From buſh to buſh, from tree to tree,*
*Why in one place then tarry we?*

*Come away; why do we ſtay?*
*We have no debt or rent to pay.*
*No bargains or accounts to make;*
*Nor Land or Leaſe to let or take:*
*Or if we had, ſhould that remore us,*
*When all the world's our own before us,*
*And where we paſs, and make reſort,*
*It is our Kingdom and our Court.*
Cuckoe *cries he, &c.* *Exeunt Cantantes.*

*Spr.* So, now away.
They dream of happineſs that live in State,
But they enjoy it that obey their Fate.

*Actus*

*Actus Secundus.*

*Vincent, Hilliard, Meriel, Rachel.*

*Vin.* I Am overcome with admiration, at the felicity they take!

*Hil.* Beggars! They are the only people, can boast the benefit of a free ſtate, in the full enjoyment of Liberty, Mirth and Eaſe; having all things in common, and nothing wanting of *Natures* whole proviſion within the reach of their deſires. Who would have loſt this ſight of their Revels?

*Vin.* How think you Ladies? Are they not the only happy in a Nation?

*Mer.* Happier then we I'm ſure, that are pent up and tyed by the noſe to the continual ſteam of hot Hoſpitality, here in our Father's houſe, when they have the Aire at pleaſure in all variety.

*Ra.* And though I know we have merrier Spirits then they, yet to live thus confin'd, ſtifles us.

*Hil.* Why Ladies, you have liberty enough; or may take what you pleaſe.

*Mer.* Yes in our Father's Rule and Government, or by his allowance. What's that to abſolute freedom; ſuch as the very Beggars have; to Feaſt and Revel here to day, and yonder to morrow; next day where they pleaſe; and ſo on ſtill, the whole Country or Kingdom over? There's Liberty! the birds of the Aire can take no more.

*Ra.* And then at home here, or whereſoever he comes, our Father is ſo penſive, (what muddy ſpirit ſoe're poſſeſſes him, would I could conjure't out) that he makes us even ſick of his ſadneſſe, that were wont *to ſee my Ghoſſips cock to day; mould Cocklebread; dance clutterdepouch; and Hannykin booby; binde barrels*; or do any thing before him, and he would laugh at us.

*Mer.* Now he never looks upon us, but with a ſigh, or tears in his eyes, tho' we ſimper never ſo ſanctifiedly. What tales have been told him of us, or what he ſuſpects I know not; God forgive him, I do; but I am weary of his houſe.

*Ra.*

*Ra.* Does he think us Whores tro, because sometimes we talk as lightly as great Ladies. I can swear safely for the Virginity of one of us, so far as Word and Deed goes; marry Thought's free.

*Mer.* Which is that one of us I pray? your self or me?

*Ra.* Good sister *Meriel*, Charity begins at home. But I'l swear as charitably of thee: And not onely because thou art a year younger neither.

*Mer.* I am beholden to you. But for my Father, I would I knew his grief and how to cure him, or that we were where we could not see it. It spoyles our mirth, and that has been better than his Meat to us.

*Vin.* Will you hear our motion Ladies?

*Mer.* Pshew, you would marry us presently out of his way, because he has given you a foolish kinde of promise: But we will see him in a better humour first, and as apt to laugh as we to lye down, I warrant him

*Hill.* 'Tis like that course will cure him, would you imbrace it.

*Ra.* We will have him cur'd first, I tell you: And you shall wait that season, and our leasure.

*Mer.* I will rather hazard my being one of the Devil's Ape-leaders, then to marry while he is melancholly.

*Ra.* Or I to stay in his house, to give entertainment to this Knight, or t'other Coxcomb, that comes to chear him up with eating of his chear: when we must fetch 'em sweetmeats, and they must tell us, Ladies, your lips are sweeter, and then fall into Courtship, one in a set speech taken out of old *Britains* Works, another with Verses out of the *Academy of Complements*, or some or other of the new Poetical Pamphletters, ambitious onely to spoile Paper, and publish their names in print. And then to be kist, and sometimes slaver'd —— fagh.

*Mer.* 'Tis not to be indur'd. We must out of the House. We cannot live but by laughing, and that aloud, and no body sad within hearing.

*Vin.* We are for any adventure with you, Ladies. Shall we project a journey for you? your Father has trusted you, and will think you safe in our company; and we would fain be abroad upon some progresse with you. Shall we make a

fling

fling to *London*, and ſee how the Spring appears there in the *Spring-Garden*, and in *Hidepark*, to ſee the Races, Horſe and Foot; to hear the *Jockies* crack; and ſee the *Adæmites* run naked afore the Ladies?

*Ra.* We have ſeen all already there, as well as they, laſt year.

*Hil.* But there ha' been new *Playes* ſince.

*Ra.* No: no: we are not for *London*.

*Hil.* What think you of a Journey to the *Bath* then?

*Ra.* Worſe than t'other way. I love not to carry my Health where others drop their Diſeaſes. There's no ſport i' that.

*Vin.* Will you up to the hill top of ſports, then, and Merriments, *Dovors Olimpicks* or the *Cotswold Games*.

*Mer.* No, that will be too publique for our Recreation. We would have it more within our ſelves.

*Hil.* Think of ſome courſe your ſelves then. We are for you upon any way, as far as Horſe and Money can carry us.

*Vin.* I, and if thoſe means failes us, as far as our legs can bear, or our hands can help us.

*Ra.* And we will put you to't. Come aſide *Meriel*——

*Aſide.*

*Vin.* Some jeere, perhaps to put upon us.

*Hil.* What think you of a Pilgrimage to St. *Winifrides Well*?

*Vin.* Or a Journey to the wiſe woman at *Nantwich*, to ask if we be fit husbands for 'em?

*Hil.* They are not ſcrupulous in that, we having had their growing loves up from our Childhoods; and the old *Squire*'s good will before all men.

*Ra. Me.* Ha ha ha——

*Vin.* What's the conceit I mervail.

*Ra. Me.* Ha ha ha ha——

*Hill.* Some merry one it ſeems.

*Ra.* And then, ſirrah *Meriel*——Heark agen——ha ha ha——

*Vin.* How they are taken with it!

*Mer.* Ha ha ha——Heark agen *Rachel*.

*Hil.* Some wonderfull Nothing ſure. They will laugh as much to ſee a ſwallow flie with a white feather imp'd in her tail.

*Vin.* They were born laughing I think.

*Ra. Me.* Ha ha ha ——

*Vin.* If it be not ſome trick put upon us, which they'l diſcover in ſome monſtrous ſhape, they cozen me. Now Ladies, is your Project ripe? poſſeſs us with the knowledge of it.

*Ra.* It is more precious, than to be imparted upon a ſlight demand.

*Hil.* Pray let us hear it. You know we are your truſty ſervants.

*Vin.* And have kept all your councels ever ſince we have been Infant-Playfellows.

*Ra.* Yes you have plaid at all kinds of ſmall game with us; but this is to the purpoſe. Ha ha ha ——

*Hil.* It ſeems ſo by your laughing.

*Ra.* And asks a ſtronger tongue-tie than tearing of Books; burning of Samplers; making Dirt-pies; or piſſe and paddle in't.

*Vin.* You know how, and what we have vow'd: to wait upon you any way, any how, and any whither.

*Mer.* And you will ſtand to't?

*Hil.* I, and go to't with you, wherever it be.

*Mer.* Pray tell 't 'em, ſiſter *Rachel.*

*Ra* Why Gentlemen --ha ha-- Thus it is-- Tell it you *Meriel.*

*Vin.* O, is that all?

*Mer.* You are the elder. Pray tell it you.

*Ra.* You are the younger. I command you tell it. Come, out with it.

They long to have it.

*Hil.* When?

*Vin.* When?

*Mer.* Introth you muſt tell it, Siſter, I cannot. Pray begin.

*Ra.* Then Gentlemen ſtand your ground.

*Vin.* Some terrible buſineſs ſure!

*Ra.* You ſeem'd e'n now to admire the felicity of *Beggars.*

*Mer.* And have ingag'd your ſelves to joyn with us in any courſe.

*Ra:*

*Ra.* Will you now with us, and for our ſakes turn *Beggars?*

*Mer.* It is our Reſolution, and our Injunction on you.

*Ra.* But for a Time, and a ſhort Progreſs.

*Mer.* And for a ſpring-trick of youth, now, in the ſeaſon.

*Vin. Beggars!* What Rogues are theſe?

*Hil.* A ſimple tryal of our Loves and ſervice!

*Ra.* Are you reſolv'd upon't? If not God bw'y'. We are reſolved to take our courſe.

*Mer.* Let yours be to keep councel.

*Vin.* Stay, ſtay. *Beggars!* Are we not ſo already?
Do we not beg your loves, and your enjoyings?
Do we not beg to be receiv'd your ſervants?
To kiſs your hands, or (if you will vouchſafe)
Your lips; or your imbraces?

*Hil.* We now beg,
That we may fetch the Rings and Prieſts to marry us.
Wherein are we no *Beggars?*

*Ra.* That will not ſerve. Your time's not come for that yet.
You ſhall beg *Victuals* firſt.

*Vin.* O, I conceive your begging progreſſe is to ramble out this Sommer among your Father's Tenents; and 'tis in requeſt among Gentlemens Daughters to devour their Cheeſe-cakes, Apple-pies, Cream and Cuſtards, Flapiacks, and Panpuddings.

*Mer.* Not ſo, not ſo,

*Hil.* Why ſo we may be a kind of civil *Beggars.*

*Ra.* I mean ſtark, errant, downright *Beggars*, I,
Without equivocations; Statute *Beggars.*

*Mer.* Couchant and Paſſant, Guardant, Rampant *Beggars.*

*Vin.* Current and vagrant ——

*Hil.* Stockant, whippant *Beggars!*

*Vin.* Muſt you and we be ſuch? would you ſo have it?

*Ra.* Such as we ſaw ſo merry; and you concluded
Were th'only happy People in a Nation.

*Mer.* The onely Freemen of a Common-wealth;
Free above *Scot-free*; that obſerve no Law,
Obey no Governour, uſe no Religion,

But what they draw from their own ancient cuſtom,
Or conſtitute themſelves, yet are no Rebels.

*Ra.* Such as of all mens Meat and all mens Money
Take a free part; and, whereſoe're they travel,
Have all things *gratis* to their hands provided.

*Vin.* Courſe fare moſt times.

*Ra.* Their ſtomack makes it good;
And feaſts on that, which others ſcorn for Food.

*Mer.* The Antidote, Content, is only theirs.
And, unto that, ſuch full delights are known,
That they conceive the Kingdom is their own.

*Vin.* 'Fore Heaven I think they are in earneſt: for they were alwayes mad.

*Hill.* And we were madder then they, if we ſhould loſe 'em.

*Vin.* 'Tis but a mad trick of youth (as they ſay) for the Spring, or a ſhort progreſs: and mirth may be made out of it; knew we how to carry it.

*Ra.* Pray Gentlemen be ſudden.
Heark, you hear the Cuckoe. *Cuckoe.*

*Hil.* We are moſt reſolutely for you in your courſe.

*Vin.* But the vexation is how to ſet it on foot.

*Ra.* We have projected it. Now if you be perfect and conſtant Lovers and friends, ſearch you the means. We have puzzell'd 'em.

*Mer.* I am glad on't. Let 'em pump.

*Vin.* Troth a ſmall ſtock will ſerve to ſet up withall. This Doublet ſold off o' my back, might ſerve to furniſh a Camp Royal of us.

*Hil.* But how to enter or arrange our ſelves into the *Crew* will be the difficulty. If we light raw and tame amongſt 'em (like Cage-Birds among a flight of wild ones) we ſhall never pick up a Living, but have our brains peckt out.

*Vin.* We want inſtruction dearly.

*Enter Springlove.*

*Hil.* O here comes *Springlove*. His great Benefactorſhip among the *Beggars* might prefer us with Authority into a ragged Regiment preſently. Shall I put it to him.

*Ra.* take heed what you do. His greatneſſe with my Father will betray us.

*Vin.*

*Vin.* I will cut his throat then. My noble *Springlove*, the great Commander of the *Maunders*, and King of *Canters*, we ſaw the gratitude of your loyal Subjects, in the large Tributary content they gave you in their Revels.

*Spr.* Did you, Sir?

*Hil.* We have ſeen all with great delight and admiration.

*Spr.* I have ſeen you too, kind Gentlemen and Ladies; and over-heard you in your queint deſign, to new create your ſelves out of the worldly bleſſings, and ſpiritual graces Heaven has beſtow'd upon you, to be partakers and Co-actors too, in thoſe vile courſes, which you call delights, tane by thoſe deſpicable and abhorred Creatures.

*Vin.* Thou art a Deſpiſer, nay a Blaſphemer
Againſt the Maker of thoſe happy Creatures.
Who, of all humane, have priority
In their content. In which they are ſo bleſt
That they enjoy moſt in poſſeſſing leaſt.
Who made 'em ſuch, doſt think? or why ſo happy?

*Ra.* He grows zealous in the Cauſe: ſure he'll beg indeed.

*Hil.* Art thou an Hypocrite, then, all this while?
Onely pretending *Charity*; or uſing it
To get a Name and Praiſe unto thy ſelf;
And not to cheriſh and increaſe thoſe *Creatures*,
In their moſt happy way of living? Or
Doſt thou beſtow thine Alms with a foul purpoſe
To ſtint their Begging, and with loſs to buy
And ſlave thoſe free ſouls from their liberty?

*Mer.* They are more zealous in the Cauſe then we.

*Spr.* But are you, Ladies, at defiance too
With Reputation, and the Dignity
Due to your Father's Houſe and You?

*Ra.* Hold thy peace, good *Springlove*,
And tho' you ſeem to diſlike this courſe, and reprove us for it,
Do not betray us in it: your throat's in queſtion.
I tell you for good will, good *Springlove*.

*Mer.* What wouldſt thou have us do?
Thou talk'ſt o' th' Houſe.
'Tis a baſe melancholly Houſe.
Our Father's ſadneſs baniſhes us out on't.

And, for the delight thou tak'ſt in *Beggars* and their brawls, thou canſt not but think they live a better life abroad, then we do in this Houſe.

*Spr.* I have ſounded your Faith: And I am glad I find you all right. And for your Father's ſadneſs, I'll tell you the cauſe on't. I over-heard it but this day in his private Diſcourſe with his merry Mate Maſter *Hearty*. He has been told by ſome *Wizard* that you both were born to be *Beggars*.

*All.* How. How!

*Spr.* For which he is ſo tormented in mind, that he cannot ſleep in peace, nor look upon you but with hearts grief.

*Vin.* This is moſt ſtrange.

*Ra.* Let him be griev'd then, till we are *Beggars*,
We have juſt reaſon to become ſo now:
And, what we thought on but in jeſt before,
We'll do in earneſt now.

*Spr.* O, I applaud this reſolution in you;
Would have perſwaded it; will be your Servant in't.
For, look ye Ladies:
The Sentence of your Fortune does not ſay, that you ſhall beg for need; hungry or cold neceſſity. If therefore you expoſe your ſelves on pleaſure into it, you ſhall abſolve your deſtiny nevertheleſs, and cure your Father's grief, I am over-joy'd to think on't; and will aſſiſt you faithfully.

*All.* A *Springlove*! a *Springlove*!

*Spr.* I am prepar'd already for th' adventure.
And will with all conveniencies furniſh,
And ſet you forth; give you your Dimenſions,
Rules and Directions: I will be your Guide,
Your Guard, your Convoy, your Authority.
You do not know my Power; my Command
I' th' *Beggars* Commonwealth.

*Vin.* But how? But how? good *Springlove*?

*Spr.* I'll confeſs all. In my Minority
My Maſter took me up a naked *Beggar*;
Bred me at School; then took me to his ſervice;
(You know in what good faſhion) and you may
Collect to memory for ſeven late Sommers,
Either by leave, pretending Friends to ſee
At far remote parts of the Land, or elſe,
By ſtealth, I would abſent my ſelf from ſervice,

To

To follow my own Pleaſure, which was Begging,
Led to't by *Nature*. My indulgent Maſter
(Yet ignorant of my courſe) on my ſubmiſſion
When Cold and Hunger forc'd me back at Winter,
Receiv'd me ſtill again. Till, two years ſince,
He being drawn by journey towards the North,
Where I then quarter'd with a ragged *Crew*;
On the high way, not dreaming of him there,
I did accoſt him, with a *Good your Worſhip*
*The Guift one ſmale penny to a Creeple*;
(For here I was with him) *and the good Lord* Halts
*To bleſs you, and reſtore it you in Heaven.*
*All.* Ha ha ha.
*Spr.* My head was dirty clouted, and this leg
Swadled with Rags, the other naked, and
My body clad, like his upon the Gibbet.
Yet, He, with ſearching eyes, through all my Rags
And counterfeit Poſtures, made diſcovery
Of his Man *Springlove*; chid me into tears;
And a confeſſion of my foreſpent life.
At laſt, upon condition, that vagary
Should be the laſt, he gave me leave to run
That *Sommer* out. In *Autumne* home came I
In my home Cloaths again and former Duty.
My Maſter not alone conſerv'd my Counſel;
But layes more weighty Truſt and Charge upon me;
Such was his love to keep me a home-Man,
That he conferr'd his Stewards place upon me,
Which clog'd me, the laſt year, from thoſe Delights,
I would not loſe again to be his Lord.
*All.* A *Springlove*, a *Springlove*.
*Spr.* Purſue the courſe you are on then, as cheerfully
As the inviting Seaſon ſmiles upon you.
Think how you are neceſſitated to it,
To quit your Father's ſadneſſe, and his fears
Touching your *Fortune*. Till you have been *Beggars*
The Sword hangs over him. You cannot think
Upon an Act of greater Piety
Unto your Father, then t'expoſe your ſelves
Brave Volunteers, unpreſs'd by common need.

Into

Into this meritorious Warfare; whence
(After a few daies, or short season spent)
You bring him a perpetual Peace and Joy
By expiating the Prophecy that torments him.
T'were worth your Time in painful, woful steps,
With your lives hazard in a Pilgrimage,
So to redeem a *Father*. But you'l find
A Progress of such Pleasure (as I'll govern't)
That the most happy Courts could never boast
In all their Tramplings on the Countries cost;
Whose envy we shall draw, when they shall read
We out-beg them, and for as little Need.

*All.* A *Springlove!* a *Springlove!*

*Spr.* Follow me, Gallants, then, as cheerfully
As--- (heark) we are summon'd forth. *Birds singing*

*All.* We follow thee.—— *Exeunt*

*Enter* Randal *A Purse in his hand.*

*Ran.* Well, go thy waies. If ever any just or charitable Steward was commended, sure thou shalt be at the last Quarter-day. Here's five and twenty pounds for this Quarters *Beggar-charge*. And (if he return not by the end of this Quarter) here's order to a Friend to supply for the next. If I now should venture for the commendation of an unjust Steward, and turn this money to mine own use! ha! dear Devil tempt me not. *I'll* do thee service in a greater Matter. But to rob the *Poor*! (a poor trick) every Church-warden can do't. Now something whispers me, that my Master, for his Stewards love, will supply the *Poor*, as *I* may handle the matter. Then *I* rob the Steward, if I restore him not the Money at his return. Away Temptation, leave me. I am frail flesh: yet *I* will fight with thee. But say the Steward never return. O but he will return. Perhaps he may not return. Turn from me *Satan*: strive not to clog my conscience. I would not have this weight upon't for all thy Kingdom.

*Enter* Hearty *singing, and* Oldrents.

*Hey down hey down a down, &c*

Remember, Sir, your Covenant to be merry.

*Old.* *I* strive you see to be so.
Yet something pricks me within, me thinks.

*Hea.* No further thought, *I* hope, of *Fortunes* tell-tales.

*Old.*

*Old.* I think not of 'em. Nor will I preſage,
That when a diſpoſition of ſadneſſe
O'reclouds my ſpirits, I ſhall therefore hear
Ill news, or ſhortly meet with ſome diſaſter.
*Hea.* Nay, when a man meets with bad tidings, why
May not he then compel his mind to mirth;
As well as pulling ſtomacks are made ſtrong
By eating againſt Appetite?
*Old.* Forc'd Mirth tho' is not good.
*Hea.* It reliſhes not you'll ſay. No more does Meat
That is moſt ſavory to a long ſick ſtomack,
Untill by Striſe and Cuſtom 'tis made good.
*Old.* You argue well. But do you ſee yond Fellow?
*Hea.* I never noted him ſo ſad before.
He neither ſings nor whiſtles.
*Old.* Something troubles him.
Can he force Mirth out of himſelf now, think you?
*Hea.* What ſpeak you of a Clod of Earth; a Hind?
But one degree above a Beaſt, compar'd
To th' aëry ſpirit of a Gentleman?
*Old.* He looks, as he came laden with ill news,
To meet me on my way.
*Hea.* 'Tis very pretty.
Suppoſe the Aſſe be tir'd with ſadneſs: will you diſ-burden him
To load your ſelf? Think of your Covenant to be merry
In ſpight of *Fortune* and her Riddle-makers.
*Old.* VVhy how now *Randal!* ſad? where's *Springlove?*
*Hea.* He's ever in his Care. But that I know
The old *Squire's* virtue, I ſhould think *Springlove*
VVere ſure his Baſtard.
*Ran.* Here's his Money, Sir.
I pray that I be charg'd with it no longer.
The Devil and I have ſtrain'd courteſie theſe two hours about it. I would not be corrupted with the truſt of more then is mine own. Mr. Steward gave it me, Sir, to order it for the *Beggars.* He has made me Steward of the Barn and them, while he is gone (he ſayes) a Journey, to ſurvey and meaſure Lands abroad about the Countreys. Some purchaſe I think for your Worſhip.

*Old.* I know his measuring of Land. He is gone his old way.
And let him go. Am not I merry *Hearty*?

*Hea.* Yes; but not hearty merry. There's a *whim* now.

*Old.* The Poor's charge shall be mine. Keep you the Money for him.

*Ran.* Mine is the greater charge then.
Knew you but my temptations and my care,
You would discharge me of it.

*Old.* Ha ha ha.

*Ran.* I have not had it so many minutes, as I have been in several Minds about it; and most of them dishonest.

*Old.* Go then, and give it to one of my Daughters to keep for *Springlove*.

*Ran.* O, I thank your Worship —— *Exit.*

*Old.* Alass poor knave! How hard a tasque it is to alter Custome!

*Hea.* And how easie for money to corrupt it.
What a pure *Treasurer* would he make!

*Old.* All were not born for weighty Offices.
Which makes me think of *Springlove*.
He might have tane his leave tho'.

*Hea.* I hope he's run away with some large Trust,
I never lik'd such demure down-look'd Fellows.

*Old.* You are deceiv'd in him.

*Hea.* If you be not 'tis well. But this is from the Covenant.

*Old.* Well Sir, I will be merry. I am resolv'd
To force my Spirit only unto Mirth.
Should I hear now, my Daughters were misled
Or run away, I would not send a sigh
To fetch 'em back.

*Hea.* To'ther old Song for that.

## Song.

*THere was an old fellow at* Waltham *Cross,*
*Who merrily sung when he liv'd by the Loss.*
*He never was heard to sigh with* Hey-ho:
*But sent it out with a* Haigh trolly lo.

He

*He chear'd up his Heart, when his Goods went to wrack,*
*With a* heghm boy, heghm, *and a Cup of old Sack.*

*Old.* Is that the way on't? well, it ſhall be mine then.

*Enter* Randal.

*Ran.* My Miſtreſſes are both abroad, Sir.

*Old.* How? ſince when?

*Ran.* On foot, Sir, two hours ſince, with the two Gentlemen their Lovers. Here's a Letter they left with the Butler. And there's a muttering in the Houſe.

*Old.* I will not read, nor open it; but conceive
Within my ſelf the worſt that can befall them;
That they are loſt and no more mine. What follows?
That I am happy: all my cares are flown.
The Counſel I anticipated from
My Friend, ſhall ſerve to ſet my Reſt upon
(Without all further helps) to jovial Mirth:
VVhich I will force out of my ſpleen ſo freely,
That Grief ſhall loſe her name, where I have being;
And ſadneſſe, from my furtheſt foot of Land,
VVhile I have life, be baniſh'd.

*Hea.* VVhat's the *whim* now?

*Old.* My Tenants ſhall ſit Rent-free for this twelve-month;
And all my Servants have their wages doubled;
And ſo ſhall be my charge in Houſe-keeping.
I hope my friends will find and put me to't.

*Hea.* For then I'le be your Undertaker, Sir.
But this is over-done. I do not like it.

*Old.* And for thy news, the Money that thou haſt,
Is now thine own. I'le make it good to *Springlove.*
Be ſad with it and leave me. For I tell thee,
I'le purge my houſe of ſtupid melancholly.

*Ran.* I'le be as merry as the Charge that's under me.

*A confuſed noyſe within of laughing and ſinging, and one crying out.*

The *Beggars*, Sir. Do'e hear 'em in the Barn?

*Old.* I'le double their allowance too; that they may
Double their Numbers, and increaſe their Noyſe:
Theſe Bear not ſound enough: and one (me thought)
Cri'd out among 'em.

*Ran.* By a most natural Cause. For there's a *Doxie*
Has been in labour, Sir. And 'tis their Custome,
With songs and shouts to drown the womans cries.
A Ceremony which they use, not for
Devotion, but to keep off Notice of
The work they have in hand. Now she is in
The straw it seems; and they are quiet.

*Hea.* The straw! that's very proper there. That's *Randal's whim.*

*Old.* We will have such a lying in, and such
A Christning; such up-sitting and Ghoslipping!
I mean to send forty miles Circuit at the least,
To draw in all the *Beggars* can be found;
And such Devices we will have for jollity,
As *Fame* shall boast to all *Posterity.*
Am I not merry *Hearty?* hearty merry?

*Hea.* Would you were else. I fear this over-doing.

*Old.* I'le do't for expiation of a crime
That's charg'd upon my Conscience till't be done.

*Hea.* What's that? what sayes he?

*Old.* We will have such a Festival month on't,
*Randal* ——

*Ran.* Sir, you may spare the labour and the cost:
They'l never thank you for't. They'l not indure
A Ceremony, that is not their own,
Belonging either to the Childe, or Mother.
A moneth Sir? They'l not be detain'd so long
For your Estate. Their work is done already:
The Bratling's born, the *Doxey's* in the *Strummel,*
Laid by an *Autum Mort* of their own Crew,
That serv'd for Mid-wife: and the Child-bed woman
Eating of hasty Pudding for her supper,
And the Childe part of it for pap
I warrant you by this time; then to sleep;
So to rise early to regain the strength
By travail, which she lost by travail.

*Hea.* There's *Randal* again.

*Old.* Can this be?

*Ran.* Shee'l have the *Bantling* at her back to morrow
That was to day in her belly, and march a foot-back with it.

*Hea,*

*Hea.* Art there again, old *Randal?*
*Ran.* And for their Ghoſſipping (now you are ſo nigh)
If you'l look in, I doubt not, but you'l find 'em
At their high Feaſt already.
*Hea.* Pray let's ſee 'em, Sir.

Randal *opens the Scene. The Beggars diſcovered at their Feaſt. After they have ſcrambled a while at their Victuals:* This *Song.*

HEre, *ſafe in our* Skipper, *let's* cly *off our* Peck,
*And* bowſe *in defiance o'th'* Harman-beck.
*Here's* Pannum *and* Lap, *and good* Poplars *of* Yarrum,
*To fill up the* Crib, *and to comfort the* Quarron.
*Now* bowſe *a round health to the Go-well and Com-well*
*Of* Ciſley Bumtrincket *that lies in the* Strummel.
*Now* bowſe *a round health to the Go-well and Com-well*
*Of* Ciſley Bumtrincket *that lies in the* Strummel.

*Here's* Ruffpeck *and* Caſſon, *and all of the beſt,*
*And Scraps of the Dainties of* Gentry Cofe's *Feaſt.*
*Here's* Grunter *and* Bleater, *with* Tib of the Buttry,
*And* Margery Prater, *all dreſt without ſluttry.*
*For all this* bene Cribbing *and* Peck *let us then,*
Bowſe *a health to the* Gentry Cofe *of the* Ken.
*Now* bowſe *a round health to the Go-well and Com-well*
*Of* Ciſley Bumtrincket *that lies in the* Strummel.

*Old.* Good Heaven how merry they are.
*Hea.* Be not you ſad at that.
*Old.* Sad *Hearty*, no unleſſe it be with envy
At their full happineſſe. What is an Eſtate
Of Wealth and Power, ballanc'd with their Freedom,
But a meer load of outward complement?
When they enjoy the Fruits of rich Content?
Our Droſs but weighs us down into Deſpair,
While their ſublimed ſpirits daunce i'th' Air.
*Hea.* I ha' not ſo much Wealth to weigh me down;
Nor ſo little (I thank *Chance*) as to dance naked.

*Old.* True my Friend *Hearty*, thou having leſſe than I,
(Of which I boaſt not) art the merrier man:
But they exceed thee in that way ſo far,
That ſhould I know, my Children now were *Beggars*
(Which yet I will not read) I muſt conclude,
They were not loſt, nor I to be agriev'd.

*Hea.* If this be madneſſe, 'tis a merry fit.

*Enter* Patrico. *Many of the Beggars look out.*

*Pat. Toure* out with your *Glaſiers*, I ſwear by the *Ruffin*,
That we are aſſaulted by a *quire Cuffin*..

*Ran.* Hold! what d'e mean, my friends? This is our Maſter.
The Maſter of your feaſt and feaſting-Houſe.'

*Pat.* Is this the *Gentry Cofe*?

*All the Beggars.* Lord bleſs his Worſhip. His good Worſhip. Bleſs his Worſhip.

*Exit Beggars* manet *Patr.*

*Pat.* Now, bounteous Sir, before you go,
Hear me, the *Beggar Patrico*;
Or Prieſt, if you do rather chuſe,
That we no word of Canting uſe.
Long may you live, and may your ſtore
Never decay, nor baulk the poor:
And as you more in years do grow,
May Treaſure to your Coffers flow;
And may your care no more thereon
Be ſet, then ours are, that have none:
But as your riches do increaſe,
So may your hearts Content and Peace.
And after many, many years,
When the Poor have quit their *Fears*
Of loſing you; and that with *Heaven*
And all the world you have made even,
Then may your bleſt Poſterity,
Age after age ſucceſſively,
Until the world ſhall be untwin'd
Inherit your Eſtate and Mind.
So ſhall the Poor to the laſt day,
For you, in your ſucceſſion, pray.

*Hea.* 'Tis a good Vote, *Sir Patrico*: but you are too grave:

Let

Let us hear and ſee ſomething of your merry *Grigs*, that can ſing, play Gambals, and do feats.

*Pat.* Sir I can lay my Function by,
And talk as wild and wantonly
As *Tom*, or *Tib*, or *Jack*, or *Jill*,
When they at *Bowſing Ken* do ſwill.
Will you therefore daign to hear
My *Autum Mort*, with throat as clear,
As was *Dame Aniſſes* of the Name;
How ſweet in Song her Notes ſhe'll frame,
That when ſhe chides, as lowd is yawning,
As *Chanticlere* wak'd by the dawning.

*Hea.* Yes, pray let's hear her. VVhat is ſhe your wife?

*Pat.* Yes *Sir*, we of our Miniſtry,
As well as thoſe oth' Presbyterie,
Takes wives and defie Dignitie. *Exit.*

*Hea.* A learned Cleark in veritie!

*Enter* Patrico *with his old wife, with a wooden Bowle of Drink. She is drunk.*

*Pat.* By *Salmon*, I think my Mort is in drink,
I find by her ſtink; and the pretty pretty pink
Of her Neyes, that half wink,
That the tipling Feaſt, with the *Doxie* in the Neaſt,
Hath turn'd her brain, to a merry merry vain.

*Mort.* Go Fiddle *Patrico*, and let me ſing. Firſt ſet me down here on both my *Prats*. Gently, gently, for cracking of my wind, now I muſt uſe it. Hem hem.

*She ſings.*

THis *is* Bien Bowſe, *this is* Bien Bowſe,
*Too little is my* Skew.
*I* bowſe *no Lage, but a whole* Gage
*Of this I'll* bowſe *to you.*

*This* Bowſe *is better than* Rom-bowſe,
*It ſets the* Gan *a* gigling;
*The* Autum-Mort *finds better ſport*
*In* bowſing *then in* nigling.
*This is* Bien-bowſe *&c.*

*She toſſes off her Bowle, falls back, and is carryed out.*

*Pat.* So ſo: your part is done—— *Exit with her*
*Hea.* How find you, Sir, your ſelf?
*Old.* VVondrous merry, my good *Hearty*.

*Enter* Patrico.

*Pat.* I wiſh we had, in all our ſtore,
Something that could pleaſe you more.
The old or *Autum-Mort*'s a ſleep;
But before the young ones creep
Into the ſtraw, Sir, if you are,
(As Gallants ſometimes love courſe fare,
(So it be freſh and wholſome VVare)
Diſpos'd to *Doxie*, or a *Dell*,
That never yet with man did Mell;
Of whom no *Upright man* is taſter,
I'll preſent her to you, Maſter.
*Old.* Away. You would be puniſh'd. Oh.
*Hea.* How is it with you, Sir?
*Old.* A ſudden qualm over-chils my ſtomack. But 'twill away.

*Enter Dauncers.*

*Pat.* See, in their rags, then, dauncing for your ſports,
Our *Clapper Dugeons* and their *walking Morts*.

*Daunce.*

*Pat.* You have done well. Now let each *Tripper*
Make a retreat into the *Skipper*;
And *couch a Hogs-head*, till the *dark man*'s paſt;
Then all with Bag and Baggage *bing awaſt*.

*Exeunt Beggars.*

*Ran.* I told you, Sir, they would begone to morrow.
I underſtand their canting.
*Old.* Take that amongſt you—— *Gives Money.*
*Pat.* May rich Plenty ſo you bleſs,
Tho' you ſtill give, you ne're have leſſe. *Exit.*
*Hea.* And as your walks may lead this way:
Pray ſtrike in here another day.
So you may go, Sir *Patrico*——
How think you, Sir? or what? or why do you think at all, unleſſe

unleſſe on Sack and Supper-time? do you fall back? do you not know the danger of relapſes?

*Old.* Good *Hearty*, thou miſtak'ſt me. I was thinking upon this *Patrico.* And that he was more ſoule than a born Beggar in him.

*Hea.* Rogue enough though, to offer us his whatd'ecalts? his *Dexies.* Heart and a cup of Sack, do we look old Beggar-niglers?

*Old.* Pray forbear that language.

*Hea.* VVill you then talk of Sack, that can drown fighing? will you in, to ſupper, and take me there your Gueſt? Or muſt I creep into the Barne among your welcome ones?

*Old.* You have rebuk'd me timely; and moſt friendly. *Exit.*

*Hea.* VVould all were well with him. *Exit.*

*Ran.* It is with me.
For now theſe pounds are (as I feel them ſwag)
Light at my heart, tho' heavy in the bag. *Exit.*

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## *Actus Tertius.*

*Vincent and Hilliard in their Rags.*

*Vin.* IS this the life that we admir'd in others; with envy at their happineſs?

*Hill.* Pray let us make vertuous uſe of it: and repent us of that deadly ſin (before a greater puniſhment than Famine and lice fall upon us) by ſteering our courſe homeward. Before Ile indure ſuch another night ——

*Vin.* VVhat? what wouldſt thou do? I would thy Miſtris heard thee.

*Hil.* I hope thee does not. For *I* know there is no altering our courſe before they make the firſt motion.

*Vin.* Is't poſſible we ſhould be weary already? and before their ſofter conſtitutions of fleſh and blood?

*Hil.* They are the ſtronger in will it ſeems.

*Enter Springlove.*

*Spr.* How now *Comrades*! repining already at your Fulneſſe of Liberty? Do you complain of eaſe?

*Vin.* Eaſe call'ſt thou it? Didſt thou ſleep to night?

*Spr.* Not ſo well theſe 18. moneths *I* ſwear; ſince my laſt walks.

*Hil.* Lightning and tempeſt is out of thy *Letany*. Could not the thunder wake thee?

*Spr.* Ha ha ha.

*Vin.* Nor the noiſe of the *Crew* in the Quarter by us?

*Hil.* Nor the Hogs in the hovel, that cryed till they drown'd the noiſe of the winde?

*If I* could but once ha'dreamt in all my former nights; that ſuch an affliction could have been found among *Beggars*, ſure *I* ſhould never have travell'd to the proof on't.

*Vin.* We look'd upon them in their Jollity, and caſt no further.

*Hil.* Nor did that onely draw us forth (by your favour *Vince*) but our obedience to our Loves, which we muſt ſuffer, till they cry home agen. Are they not weary yet, as much as we doſt think *Springlove?*

*Spr.* They have more moral underſtanding then ſo. They know (and ſo may you) this is your Birthnight into a new World. And we all know (or have been told) that all come crying into the World, when the whole World of Pleaſures is before us. The World it ſelf had ne'r been glorious, had it not firſt been a confuſed *Chaos*.

*Vin.* Well: never did *Knight Errants* in all Adventures, merit more of their Ladies, than we *Beggar-errants* or errant Beggars, do in ours.

*Spr.* The greater will be your Reward. Think upon that. And ſhew no manner of diſtaſte to turn their hearts from you. Y'are undone then.

*Hil.* Are they ready to appear out of their privy Lodgings, in the Pigs Palace of Pleaſure? Are they comming forth?

*Spr.* I left 'em almoſt ready, fitting on their Pads of ſtraw, helping to dreſſe each others heads (The ones eye is the tothers Looking-glaſſe) with the prettieſt coyle they keep to fit their fancies in the moſt gracefull way of wearing their new,

new Dreſſings, that you would admire.

*Vin.* I hope we as gracefully ſet out. Are we not?

*Spr.* Indifferent well. But will you fall to practiſe? Let me hear how you can *Maund* when you meet with Paſſengers.

*Hil.* We do not look like men, I hope, too good to learn.

*Spr.* Suppoſe ſome Perſons of Worth or Wealth paſſing by now. Note me. Good your good Worſhip, your Charity to the Poor, that will duly and truly pray for you day and night.——

*Vin.* Away you idle Rogue, you would be ſet to work and whipt——

*Spr.* That is lame and ſick; hungry and comfortleſs——

*Vin.* If you were well ſerv'd ——

*Spr.* And even to bleſſe you and reward you for it ——

*Hil.* Prethee hold thy peace (here be dolefull Notes indeed) and leave us to our own *Genius*. If we muſt beg, let's let it go, as it comes, by Inſpiration. I love not your ſet-form of Begging.

*Spr.* Let me inſtruct ye tho'.

*Enter* Rachel *and* Meriel *in Rags.*

*Ra.* Have a care, good *Meriel*, what hearts or limbs ſoever we have, and tho' never ſo feeble, let us ſet our beſt faces on't, and laugh our laſt gaſp out before we diſcover any diſlike, or wearineſs to them. Let us bear it out, till they complain firſt; and beg to carry us home a pick pack.

*Mer.* I am ſorely ſurbated with hoofing already tho', and ſo crupper-crampt with our hard lodging, and ſo bumfidled with the ſtraw, that ——

*Ra.* Think not on't. I am numm'd i' the bum and ſhoulders too a little. And have found the difference between a hard floor with a little ſtraw, and a down Bed with a Quilt upon't. But no words, not a ſowre look I prethee.

*Hill.* O here they come now; Madam *Fewcloaths*, and my Lady *Bonnyrag*.

*Vin.* Peace, they ſee us.

*Ra. Mer.* Ha ha ha.

*Vin.* We are glad the Object pleaſes ye.

*Ra.* So do'a the Subject.

Now you appear the glories of the Spring,
Darlings of *Phœbus* and the Sommers heirs.

*Hil.* How fairer, then fair *Floras* ſelf appear
(To deck the Spring) *Diana's* Darlings dear!
O let us not *Acteon*-like be ſtrook
(With greedy eyes while we preſume to look
On your half nakedneſs, ſince courteous rags
Cover the reſt) into the ſhape of Stags.

*Ra. Mer.* Ha ha ha——We are glad you are ſo merry.

*Vin.* Merry and luſty too. This night will we lye together as well as the proudeſt Couple in the Barn.

*Hil.* And ſo will we. I can hold out no longer.

*Ra.* Do's the ſtraw ſtir up your fleſh to't, Gentlemen?

*Mer.* Or do's your Provender prick you?

*Spr.* What! do we come for this? laugh and lye down
When your bellies are full. Remember, Ladies,
You have not beg'd yet, to quit your *Deſtiny*:
But have liv'd hitherto on my endeavours.
Who got your ſuppers, pray, laſt night, but I?
Of dainty Trencher-Fees, from a Gentlemans houſe:
Such as the Serving-men themſelves, ſometimes,
Would have been glad of. And this morning now,
What comfortable Chippings and ſweet Buttermilk
Had you to Breakfaſt!

*Ra.* O 'twas excellent! I feel it good ſtill, here.

*Mer.* There was a brown Cruſt amongſt it, that has made my neck ſo white me thinks. Is it not *Rachel*.

*Ra.* Yes. You ga'me none on't. You ever covet to have all the Beauty.
'Tis the ambition of all younger Siſters.

*Vin.* They are pleas'd, and never like to be weary.

*Hil.* No more muſt we, if wee'l be theirs.

*Spr.* Peace Here come Paſſengers. Forget not your Rules; and quickly diſperſe your ſelves, and fall to your Calling——

*Enter two Gentlemen.*

1. Lead the Horſes down the Hill. The heat of our ſpeed is over, for we have loſt our Journey.

2. Had they taken this way, we had over taken 'em, or heard of 'em at leaſt.

1. But ſome of our Scouts will light on 'em, the whole Coun-

Countrey being overſpread with 'em.

2. There was never ſuch an eſcape elſe.

*Vin.* A ſearch for us perhaps. Yet I know not them, nor they me, *I* am ſure. I might the better beg of 'em. But how to begin, or ſet the worſt leg forwards, would I were whipt if I know now.

1. That a young Gentlewoman of her breeding, and Heir to ſuch an Eſtate, ſhould flie from ſo great a Match, and run away with her Uncles Cleark!

2. The old Juſtice will run mad upon't I fear.

*Vin.* If I were to be hang'd now, *I* could not beg for my life.

*Spr.* Step forwards and beg handſomely. I'll ſet my Goad i'your breech elſe.

*Vin.* What ſhall I ſay?

*Spr.* Have I not told you? now begin.

*Vin.* After you, good *Springlove.*

*Spr. Good, your good Worſhips.* ——

1. Away you idle Vagabond——

*Spr. Your Worſhips Charity to a poor Crytur welly ſtarv'd.*

*Vin. That will duly and truly prea for yee.*

2. You counterfet Villains, hence.

*Spr. Good Maſters ſweet Worſhip, for the tender mercy of* ——

*Vin. Duly and truly prea for you.*

1. You would be well whipt and ſet to work, if you were duly and truly ſerv'd.

*Vin.* Did not I ſay ſo before?

*Spr. Good Worſhipful Maſters Worſhip, to beſtow your Charity, and* —— *to maintain your health and Limbs.*

*Vin. Duly and truly pray for you.*

2. Be gone, I ſay, you impudent luſty young Raſcals. I'll ſet you going elſe. *Switch 'em.*

*Spr. Ah the goodneſſe of compaſſion to ſoften your hearts to the poor.*

*Vin.* Oh the Devil, muſt not we beat 'em now? ſteth——

*Spr.* Nor ſhew an angry look for all the skin of our backs. Ah the ſweetneſſe of that mercy that gives to all, to move your compaſſion to the hungry, when it ſhall ſeem good unto you, and night and day to bleſſe all that you have. Ah ah——

2. Come back ſirrah. His Patience and Humility has wrought upon me.

*Vin. Duly and*——

2. Not you ſirrah. The t'other. You look like a ſturdy Rogue.

*Spr.* Lord bleſſe you Maſters Worſhip.

2. There's a half-penny for you. Let him have no ſhare with you.

*Vin.* I ſhall never thrive o'this Trade.

1. They are of a Fraternity, and will ſhare, I warrant you.

*Spr.* Never in our lives trooly. He never begg'd with me before.

1. But if Hedges or Henroofts could ſpeak, you might be found ſharers in Pillage, I believe.

*Spr.* Never ſaw him before, bleſs you good Maſter, in all my life. ( Beg for your ſelf. Your Credit's gone elſe. ) *Good Hea'ne to bliſſe and proſper yea.* *Exit.*

2. Why doſt thou follow us? Is it your office to be privy to our talk?

*Vin. Sir, I beſeech you hear me, ( S'life what ſhall I ſay? ) I am a ſtranger in theſe parts, and deſtitute of Means and Apparel.*

1. So me thinks, and what o'that.

*Vin. Will you therefore be pleas'd, as you are worthy Gentlemen, and bleſt with plenty*——

2. This is Courtly!

*Vin. Out of your abundant ſtore, towards my relief in extream neceſſity, to furniſh me with a ſmall parcel of Money---- five or ſix peeces, or ten, if you can preſently ſpare it.*

1. 2. Stand off. *Draw.*

*Vin.* I have ſpoil'd all; and know not how to beg otherwiſe.

1. Here's a new way of begging!

*Vin.* Quite run out of my Inſtructions.

2. Some High-way Theef o' my conſcience, that forgets he is weaponleſs.

*Vin.* Onely to make you merry, Gentlemen, at my unskilfulneſſe in my new Trade. I have been another man i'my dayes. So I kiſſe your hands. *Exit.*

1. With your heels do you?

2. It had been good to have apprehended the Rake-ſhame.

There

There is ſome myſterie in his Rags. But let him go.

*Enter* Oliver, *putting up his ſword.*

*Ol.* You found your legs in time, I had made you halt ſo. ſomething elſe.

1. Maſter O*liver*, well return'd; what's the matter, Sir?

*Ol.* Why, Sir, a counterfeit lame Rogue beg'd of me; but in ſuch Language, the high Sheriffs Son o'the Shire could not have ſpoke better; nor to have borrowed a greater ſumme. (He ask'd me if I could ſpare him ten or twenty pound.) I ſwitch'd him, his Cudgel was up. I drew, and into the Wood he ſcap'd me, as nimbly —— But firſt he told me, I ſhould hear from him by a Gentleman, to require ſatisfaction of me.

2. VVe had ſuch another beg'd of us. The Court goes a begging, I think.

1. Dropt through the Clouds, *I* think; more *Lucifers* travailing to Hell, that beg by the way. Met you no news of your Kinſwoman, Miſtris *Amie*.

*Ol.* No. VVhat's the matter with her? Goes her Marriage forwards with young Maſter *Talboy*? *I* haſten'd my Journey from *London* to be at the VVedding.

2. T'was to ha'bin yeſterday morning; all things in readineſſe prepar'd for it. But the Bride, ſtolne by your Father's Cleark, is ſlipt away. VVe were in queſt of 'em, and ſo are twenty more, ſeveral waies.

*Ol.* Such young wenches will have their own waies in their own loves, what Matches ſoever their Guardians make for 'em. An I *I* hope my Father will not follow the *Law* ſo cloſe to hang his Cleark for ſtealing his VVard with her own conſent. *It* may breed ſuch a grudg, may cauſe ſome Clearks to hang their Maſters, that have e'm o' the hip of injuſtice. Beſides, *Martin* (though he be his ſervant) is a Gentleman. But, indeed, the miſerableſt Raſcal! He will grudge her Meat when he has her.

1. Your Father is exceedingly troubled at their eſcape. *I* wiſh that you may qualifie him with your Reaſons.

*Ol.* But what ſayes *Talboy* to the matter, the Bridegroom, that ſhould ha' been?

2. Marry he ſayes little to the purpoſe; but cries outright.

*Ol.*

*Ol.* I like him well for that: He holds his humour. A miſerable wretch too, tho' rich. I ha' known him cry when he has loſt but three ſhillings at Mum-chance. But, Gentlemen, keep on your way to comfort my Father. I know ſome of his Mans private haunts about the Country here, which I will ſearch immediately.

1. We will accompany you, if you pleaſe.

*Ol.* No, by no means: That will be too publique.

2. Do your pleaſure. *Exit* 1, 2.

*Ol.* My pleaſure, and all the ſearch that I intend, is, by hovering here, to take a review of a brace of the handſomeſt *Beggar-braches* that ever grac'd a Ditch or a Hedge ſide. I paſt by 'em in haſt, but ſomthing ſo poſſeſſes me, that I muſt ——— What the Devil muſt I? A *Beggar?* Why, *Beggars* are fleſh and blood; and Rags are no Diſeaſes. Their Lice are no French Fleas. And there is much wholſommer fleſh under Country Dirt, than City Painting: And leſſe danger in Dirt and Rags, than in Ceruſe and Sattin. I durſt not take a touch at *London*, both for the preſent coſt, and fear of an after-reckoning. But *Oliver*, doſt thou ſpeak like a Gentleman? fear Price or Pox, ha? Marry do I Sir: Nor can *Beggar-ſport* be inexcuſable in a young Country Gentleman, ſhort of means, for another reſpect, a principal one indeed; to avoid the puniſhment or charge of *Bigtardy*: There's no commuting with them; or keeping of Children for them. The poor Whores, rather than part with their own, or want Children at all, will ſteal other folks, to travel with, and move compaſſion. He feeds a Beggar-wench well that fills her belly with young bones. And theſe reaſons conſidered, good Maſter *Oliver* ——— s'lid yonder they are at peep. And now ſitten down as waiting for my purpoſe.

*Enter* Vincent.

Heart here's another delay. I muſt ſhift him. Doſt hear honeſt poor fellow? I prethee go back preſently, and at the hill foot (here's ſixpence for thy pains) thou ſhalt find a Footman with a Horſe in his hand. Bid him wait there. His Maſter will come preſently, ſay.

*Vin.* Sir, I have a buſineſſe of another nature to you. Which (as I preſume you are a Gentleman of right Noble Spirit and Reſolution) you will receive without offence; and

and in that temper as moſt properly appertains to the moſt *Heroick* natures.

*Ol.* Thy Language makes me wonder at thy Perſon. What's the matter with thee? quickly.

*Vin.* You may be pleas'd to call to mind a late affront, which, in your heat of paſſion, you gave a Gentleman.

*Ol.* What, ſuch a one as thou art, was he?

*Vin.* True noble Sir. Who could no leſſe in Honour, then direct me, his choſen Friend, unto you, with the length of his Sword, or to take the length of yours. The place, if you pleaſe, the Ground whereon you parted; the hour, ſeven the next morning: Or, if you like not theſe, in part, or all, to make your own appointments.

*Ol.* The braveſt Method in *Beggars*, that ever was diſcovered! I would be upon the bones of this Rogue now, but for croſſing my other deſign, which fires me. I muſt therefore be rid of him on any terms. Let his own Appointments ſtand. Tell him I'le meet him.

*Vin.* You ſhall moſt nobly ingage his life to ſerve you, Sir.

*Ol.* You'll be his Second, will you?

*Vin.* To do you further ſervice, Sir, I have undertaken it.

*Ol.* I'le ſend a Beadle ſhall undertake you both.

*Vin.* Your Mirth becomes the bravery of your mind and dauntleſſe Spirit. So takes his leave your Servant, Sir.

*Ol.* I think, as my Friend ſaid, the Court goes a Begging indeed. But I muſt not loſe my Beggar-whenches.

*Enter* Rachel, *and* Meriel.

Oh here they come. They are delicately skin'd and limb'd. There, there, I ſaw above the ham as the wind blew. Now they ſpie me.

*Ra.* Sir, I beſeech you look upon us with the favour of a Gentleman. We are in a preſent diſtreſſe, and utterly unacquainted in theſe parts; and therefore forc'd by the Calamity of our miſ-fortune, to implore the Courteſie, or rather Charity, of thoſe to whom we are ſtrangers.

*Ol.* Very fine, this!

*Mer.* Be therefore pleas'd, right Noble Sir, not only valuing us by our outward Habits, which cannot but appear loathſome or deſpicable unto you, but as we are forlorn Chriſtians; and, in that eſtimation, be compaſſionately moved

ved to caſt a handfull or two of your Silver, or a few of your Golden Pieces unto us, to furniſh us with Linnen, and ſome decent Habilliments ——

*Ol.* They beg as high as the Man-beggar I met withall ſure the Beggars are all mad to day, or bewitched into a Language they underſtand not. The ſpirits of ſome decay'd Gentry talk in 'em ſure.

*Ra.* May we expect a gracious Anſwer from you Sir?

*Mer.* And that as you can wiſh our Virgin Prayers to be propitious for you.

*Ra.* That you never be deny'd a Suit by any Miſtreſs.

*Mer.* Nay, that the faireſt may be ambitious to place their favours on you.

*Ra.* That your Virtue and Valour may lead you to the moſt honourable Actions; and that the Love of all exquiſite Ladies may arm you.

*Mer.* And that, when you pleaſe to take a wife may Honour, Beauty, and Wealth, contend to endow her moſt with.

*Ra.* And that with her you have a long and proſperous life.

*Mer.* A fair and fortunate Poſterity.

*Ol.* This exceeds all that ever I heard, and ſtrikes me into wonder. Pray tell me how long have you been *Beggars*; or how chanc'd you to be ſo?

*Ra.* By influence of our Stars, Sir.

*Mer.* We were born to no better *Fortune.*

*Ol.* How came you to talk thus, and ſo much above the *Beggars* Dialect?

*Ra.* Our ſpeech came naturally to us, and we ever lov'd to learn by wrote as well as we could.

*Mer.* And to be ambitious above the vulgar, to ask more then common Alms, what ere men pleaſe to give us.

*Ol.* Sure ſome well diſpoſed Gentleman, as my ſelf, got theſe Wenches. They are too well grown to be mine own, and I cannot be inceſtuous with 'em.

*Ra. Pray Sir your noble bounty.*

*Ol.* What a tempting lip that little Rogue moves there! and what an inticing eye the tother. I know not which to begin with. What's this a flea upon thy boſome?

*Mer.*

*Mer.* Is it not a ſtraw colour'd one, Sir?

*Ol.* O what a provoking *Skin* is there! that very touch inflames me.

*Ra. Sir, are you mov'd in charity towards us yet?*

*Ol.* Mov'd? I am mov'd. No fleſh and blood more mov'd.

*Mer. Then pray Sir your Benevolence.*

*Ol.* Benevolence? which ſhall I be Benevolent to; or which firſt? I am puſſell'd in the choyce. Would ſome ſworn Brother of mine were here to draw a Cut with me.

*Ra. Sir, Noble Sir.*

*Ol.* Firſt let me tell you, *Damſells*, I am bound by a ſtrong vow to kiſſe all of the woman ſex I meet this morning.

*Mer. Beggars* and all Sir?

*Ol.* All, all. Let not your coyneſſe croſſe a Gentlemans vow, I beſeech you —— *Kiſſes.*

*Ra.* You will tell now.

*Ol.* Tell quoth a! I could tell a thouſand on thoſe Lips —— and as many upon thoſe. What life-reſtoring breaths they have! Milk from the Cow ſteams not ſo ſweetly. I muſt lay one of 'em abroad; both if my tackling hold.

*Ra. Mer.* Sir, Sir.

*Ol.* But how to bargain, now, will be the doubt. They that beg ſo high as by the handfulls, may expect for price above the rate of good mens wives.

*Ra. Now, will you, Sir, be pleas'd?*

*Ol.* With all my heart, Sweetheart. And I am glad thou knoweſt my mind. Here is twelve-pence a peece for you.

*Ra. Me.* We thank you, Sir.

*Ol.* That's but in earneſt. I'll Jeſt away the reſt with yee Look here —— All this. Come, you know my meaning. Doſt thou look about thee, Sweet little One? I like thy care. There's no body coming. But we'll get behind theſe Buſhes. I know you keep each others Counſels —— Muſt you be drawn to't? Then I'll pull. Come away ——

*Ra. Me.* Ah ah ——

*Enter Springlove, Vincent, Hilliard.*

*Vin.* Let's beat his brains out.

*Ol.* Come leave your ſquealing.

*Ra.* O you hurt my hand.

*Hill.* Or cut the Lechers throat.

*Spr.* Would you be hang'd? Stand back. Let me alone.

*Mer.* You ſhall not pull us ſo.

*Spr.* O do not hurt 'em, Maſter.

*Ol.* Hurt 'em? I meant 'em but too well. Shall I be ſo prevented.

*Spr.* They be but young and ſimple. And if they have offended, let not your Worſhips own hands drag 'em to the Law, or carry 'em to Puniſhment. Correct 'em not your ſelf. It is the Beadles Office.

*Ol.* Do you talk Shake-rag: Heart yond's more of 'em. I ſhall be Beggar-mawl'd if I ſtay. Thou ſaiſt right, honeſt fellow, there's a Teſter for thee. *Exit running.*

*Vin.* He is prevented, and aſham'd of his purpoſe.

*Spr.* Nor were we to take notice of his purpoſe more than to prevent it.

*Hill.* True, politique *Springlove*, 'twas better his own fear quit us of him, than our force.

*Ra.* Look you here, Gentlemen, twelvepence a peece.

*Mer.* Beſides fair offers and large promiſes. What ha' you got to day, Gentlemen?

*Vin.* More then (as we are Gentlemen) we would have taken.

*Hill.* Yet we put it up in your Service.

*Ra. Mer.* Ha ha ha. Switches and kicks. Ha ha ha ——

*Spr.* Talk not here of your Gettings. We muſt quit this Quarter. The eager Gentlemans repulſe may arm and return him with revenge upon us. We muſt therefore leap Hedge and Ditch now; through the Bryers and Myres, till we ſcape out of this Liberty, to our next *Rendevouz*; where we ſhall meet the *Crew*, and then, *hay toſſe* and laugh all night.

*Mer.* As we did laſt night.

*Ra.* Hold out, *Meriel.*

*Mer.* Lead on, brave *Generall.* *to Spr.*

*Vin.* What ſhall we do? They are in heart ſtill. Shall we go on?

*Hill.* There's no flinching back, you ſee.

*Spr.* Beſides, if you beg no better then you begin, in this lofty Faſhion, you cannot ſcape the Jayle, or the whip, long

*Vin.*

*Vin.* To tell you true, 'tis not the leaſt of my purpoſe, to work means for our diſcovery, to be releas'd out of our Trade. *Enter* Martin *and* Amie *in poor habits.*

*Spr.* Stay here come more Paſſengers. Single your ſelves agen, and fall to your Calling diſcreetly.

*Hill.* I'll ſingle no more. If you'll beg in full cry I am for you.

*Mer.* I that will be fine; let's charm all together.

*Spr.* Stay firſt and liſt a little.

*Mar.* Be of good cheer, Sweetheart, we have ſcap'd hitherto: And I believe that all the Search is now retir'd, and we may ſafely paſſe forwards.

*Am.* I ſhould be ſafe with thee. But that's a moſt lying Proverb, that ſaies, Where *Love* is, there's no Lack. I am faint, and cannot travel further without Meat; and if you lov'd me, you would get me ſome.

*Mar.* We'll venter at the next Village to call for ſome. The beſt is, we want no Money.

*Am.* We ſhall be taken then, I fear. I'll rather pine to death.

*Mar.* Be not ſo fearfull. Who can know us in theſe Clowniſh Habits?

*Am.* Our Cloaths, indeed, are poor enough to beg with. Would I could beg, ſo it were of Strangers that could not know me, rather then buy of thoſe that would betray us.

*Mar.* And yonder be ſome that can teach us.

*Spr.* Theſe are the young couple of Run-away Lovers diſguiz'd, that the Country is ſo laid for. Obſerve and follow now. *Now the Lord to come with ye, good loving Maſter and Mayſtreſſe, your bleſſed Charity to the poor, lame and ſick, weak and comfortleſſe, that will night and day* ——

*All. Duly and truly pray for you. Duly and truly pray for you.*

*Spr.* Pray hold your peace, and let me alone. *Good young Maſter and Miſtris, a little Comfort amongſt us all, and to bleſſe you where e're you go, and*

*All. Duly and truly pray for you. Duly and truly* ——

*Spr.* Pray do not uſe me thus. *Now ſweet young Maſter and Miſtris, to look upon your Poor, that have no relief or ſuccour, no bread to put in our heads.*

*Vin.* Wouldſt thou put Bread in thy Brains?

All together.

*No Lands or Livings.*
*Spr. No House nor home; nor covering from the cold; no health, no help but your sweet Charity.*
*Mer. No Bands or Shirts but lowsie on our backs.*
*Hil. No Smocks or Petticoats to hide our Scratches.*
*Ra. No Shooes to our Legs, or Hose to our Feet.*
*Vin. No Skin to our Flesh, nor Flesh to our Bones shortly.*
*Hil.* If we follow the Devil that taught us to beg.
*All. Duly and truly pray for you.*

*Spr.* I'll run away from you if you beg a stroak more. *Good worshipfull Master and Misteres* ——

*Mar.* Good Friend forbear. Here is no Master or Mistris. We are poor Folks. Thou seest no Worship upon our backs, I am sure. And for within, we want as much as you, and would as willingly beg, if we knew how as well.

*Spr.* Alack for pitty. You may have enough. And what I have is yours, if you'll accept it. 'Tis wholsom Food from a good Gentlemans Gate—— Alas good Mistris—— Much good do your heart. How savourly she feeds!

*Mar.* What do you mean; to poyson your self?

*Am.* Do you shew Love in grudging me?

*Mar.* Nay, if you think it hurts you not, fall too. I'il not beguile you. And here, mine Host, something towards your Reckoning.

*Am.* This *Beggar* is an *Angel* sure!

*Spr.* Nothing by way of bargain, gentle Master. 'Tis against Order, and will never thrive. But pray, Sir, your reward in Charity.

*Mar.* Here then in Charity. This fellow would never make a Cleark.

*Spr.* What! All this, Master?

*Am.* What is it? Let me see't.

*Spr.* 'Tis a whole silver three-pence, Mistres.

*Am.* For shame, ingratefull Miser. Here Friend, a golden Crown for thee.

*Spr.* Bountifull Goodness! Gold? If I thought a dear year were coming, I would take a Farm now.

*Am.* I have rob'd thy Partners of their shares too. There's a Crown more for them.

4. *Duly and truly pray for you.*

*Mar.*

*Mar.* What have you done? leſſe would have ſerv'd. And your Bounty will betray us.

*Am.* Fie on your wretched policy.

*Spr.* No, no good Maſter. I knew you all this while, and my ſweet Miſtris too. And now I'll tell you. The Search is every way; the Country all laid for you. 'Tis well you ſtaid here. Your Habits, were they but a little neerer our Faſhion, would ſecure you with us. But are you maried, Maſter and Miſtris? Are you joyned in Matrimony? In heart I know you are. And I will (if it pleaſe you) for your great bounty, bring you to a Curate, that lacks no Licenſe, nor has any Living to loſe, that ſhall put you together.

*Mar.* Thou art a heavenly *Beggar!*

*Spr.* But he is ſo ſcrupulous, and ſeverely preciſe, that unleſſe you, Miſtris, will affirm that you are with Childe by the Gentleman; or that you have, at leaſt, cleft or ſlept together (as he calls it) he will not mary you. But if you have lyen together, then 'tis a caſe of neceſſity, and he holds himſelf bound to do it.

*Mar.* You may ſay you have.

*Am.* I would not have it ſo, nor make that lye againſt my ſelf for all the World.

*Spr.* That I like well, and her exceedingly. *Aſide.* I'll do my beſt for you however.

*Mar.* I'll do for thee, that --- thou ſhalt never beg more.

*Spr.* That cannot be purchas'd ſcarce for the price of your Miſtris. Will you walk, Maſter? --- We uſe no Complements.

*Am.* By inforc'd Matches Wards are not ſet free
So oft, as ſold into Captivity:
Which made me, fearleſſe, fly from one I hate,
Into the hazard of a harder Fate.

*Actus*

*Actus Quartus. Scena Prima.*

*Enter* Talboy. Oliver. *With riding Switches.*

*Tal.* SHe's gone. *Amie* is gone. Ay me she's gone, And has me left of joy bereft, to make me mone. O me, *Amie.*

*Ol.* What the Devil ayles the Fellow tro? why! why Master *Talboy*; my Cozen *Talboy* that should'st ha' been, art not asham'd to cry at this growth? and for a thing that's better lost than found; a VVench?

*Tal.* Cry! who cryes? do I cry; or look with a crying Countenance? I scorn it; and scorn to think on her, but in just anger.

*Ol.* So this is brave now if 'twould hold.

*Tal.* Nay it shall hold. And so let her go, for a scurvy what-d'ecall't; I know not what bad enough to call her---But something of mine goes with her I am sure. She has cost me in Gloves, Ribands, Scarfes, Rings, and such like things, more than *I* am able to speak of at this time---Oh.

*Ol.* Because thou canst not speak for crying. Fy Master *Talboy*, agen?

*Tal. I* scorn it agen, and any man that sayes *I* cry, or will cry agen. And let her go agen; and what she has of mine let her keep, and hang her self, and the Rogue that's with her. *I* have enough; and am Heir of a well-known Estate, and that she knows --- And therefore that she should sleight me, and run away with a wages-fellow, that is but a petty Cleark and a Serving-man. There's the vexation of it--- Oh there's the grief and vexation of it--- Oh---

*Ol.* Now he will cry his eyes out! You Sir. This life have *I* had with you all our long journey; which now is at an end here. This is Master *Oldrents* house, where perhaps we shall find old *Hearty*, the Uncle of that Rogue *Martin*, that is run away with your Sweet-heart.

*Tal. I*'tis too true, too true, too true. You need not put me in mind on't--Oh--O

*Ol.* Hold your peace and mind me. Leave your bawling, for

for fear I give you correction. This is the Houſe I ſay, where it is moſt likely we ſhall hear of your Miſtris and her companion. Make up your face quickly. Here comes one of the Servants, I ſuppoſe. *Enter Randall.*
Shame not your ſelf for ever, and me for company. Come, be confident.

*Tall.* As confident as your ſelf or any man——But my poor heart feels what lies here. Here. *I* here it is, O——

*Ol.* Good morrow, Friend. This is Squire *Oldrents* Houſe, *I* take it.

*Ran.* Pray take it not, Sir, before it be to be let. *It* has been my Maſters, and his Anceſtors in that Name, above theſe three hundred years, as our Houſe Chronicle doth notifie; and not yet to be let. But as a friend, or ſtranger, in Gueſt-wiſe, you are welcome to it; as all other Gentlemen are, far and neer, to my good Maſter, as you will find anon when you ſee him.

*Ol.* Thou ſpeak'ſt wittily and honeſtly. But *I* prethee good Friend, let our Nags be ſet up: they are tyed up at the poſt. You belong to the Stable, do you not?

*Ran.* Not ſo much as the Stable belongs to me. Sir, *I* paſſe through many Offices of the Houſe, Sir. *I* am the running *Bayley* of it.

*Ol.* VVe have rid hard, hoping to find the *Squire* at home at this early time in the morning.

*Ran.* You are deceiv'd in that, Sir. He has been out theſe four hours. He is no *Snayle*, Sir. You do not know him, *I* perceive, ſince he has been new moulded. But *I*'ll tell you, becauſe you are Gentlemen.

*Ol.* Our Horſes, good Friend.

*Ran.* My Maſter is an ancient Gentleman, and a great Houſe-keeper; and praid for by all the Poor in the Countrey. He keeps a Gueſt-houſe for all *Beggars*, far and neer, coſts him a hundred a year, at leaſt; and is as well belov'd among the Rich. But, of late, he fell into a great Melancholly, upon what, *I* know not: for he had then more cauſe to be merry than he has now. Take that by the way.

*Ol.* But Good Friend, our Horſes.

*Ran.* For he had two Daughters, that knew well to order a Houſe, and give entertainment to Gentlemen. They were his

*Houſe-Doves.* But now they are flown; and no man knows how, why, or whither.

*Tall.* My *Dove* is flown too. Oh ——

*Ran.* VVas ſhe your Daughter, Sir, ? She was a young one then, by the Beard you wear.

*Tal.* What ſhe was, ſhe was, d'ee ſee. I ſcorn to think on her---But I do---Oh.

*Ol.* Pray hold your peace, or feign ſome mirth, if you can.

*Sing Tal.* Let her go, let her go. *I care not if I have her, I have her or no.* Ha ha ha--- Oh my heart will break---Oh---

*Ol.* Pray think of our horſes, Sir.

*Ran.* This is right my Maſter. When he had his Daughters he was ſad; and now they are gone, he is the merrieſt man alive. Up at five a clock in the morning, and out till Dinner-time. Out agen at afternoon, and ſo till Supper-time. Skiſe out this away, and skiſe out that away. ( He's no *Snayle* I aſſure you. ) And *Tantivy* all the Country over, where Hunting, Hawking, or any ſport is to be made, or good Fellowſhip to be had; and ſo merry upon all occaſions, that you would even bleſſe your ſelf, if it were poſſible.

*Ol.* Our horſes, I prethee.

*Ran.* And we, his Servants, live as merrily under him; and do all thrive. I my ſelf was but a filly Lad when I came firſt, a poor turn-ſpit Boy. Gentlemen kept no whirling Jacks then, to cozen poor People of Meat. And I have now, without boaſt, 40 *l.* in my Purſe, and am the youngeſt of half a ſcore in the Houſe, none younger then my ſelf but one; and he is the Steward over all; his name is Maſter *Springlove* ( bleſſe him where ere he is ) he has a world of means: And we, the Underlings, get well the better by him; beſides the Rewards many Gentlemen give us, that fare well, and lodge here ſometimes.

*Ol.* O! we ſhall not forget you, Friend, if you remember our horſes, before they take harm.

*Ran.* No hurt, I warrant you: there's a Lad walking them.

*Ol.* Is not your Maſter coming, think you?

*Ran.* He will not be long a coming. He's no *Snayle*, as I told you.

*Ol.* You told me ſo, indeed.

*Ran.* But of all the Gentlemen, that toſſe up the Ball, yea and

and the *Sack* too, commend me to old Maſter *Hearty*, a decay'd Gentleman; lives moſt upon his own Mirth, and my Maſters Means, and much good do him with it: He is the fineſt Companion of all: He doe's ſo hold my Maſter up with Stories, and Songs, and Catches, and t'other Cup of *Sack*, and ſuch Tricks and Jiggs, you would admire---- He is with him now.

*Ol.* That *Hearty* is *Martins* Uncle. I am glad he is here. Bear up *Talboy*. Now, Friend pray let me ask you a queſtion.---- Prethee ſtay.

*Ran.* Nay, marry I dare not. Your Yawdes may take cold, and never be good after it.—— *Exit.*

*Ol.* I thought I ſhould never have been rid of him. But no ſooner deſir'd to ſtay, but he is gone. A pretty humour!

*Enter Randall.*

*Ran.* Gentlemen, my Maſter will be here e'ne now, doubt not: for he is no *Snayle*, as I told you. *Exit.*

*Ol.* No *Snayle*'s a great word with him. Prethee *Talboy* bear up. *Enter Uſher.*

Here comes another gray Fellow.

*Uſh.* Do you ſtand in the Porch, Gentlemen? the Houſe is open to you. Pray enter the Hall. I am the Uſher of it.

*Ol.* In good time, *Sir*. We ſhall be bold here, then, to attend your Maſters coming.

*Uſh.* And he's upon coming; and when he comes, he comes apace. He is no *Snayle*, I aſſure you.

*Ol.* I was told ſo before, *Sir*. No *Snayle*! ſure 'tis the word of the houſe, and as ancient as the Family.

*Uſh.* This Gentleman looks ſadly, me thinks.

*Tal.* Who I? not I. Pray pardon my looks for that. But my heart feels what's what. Ay me---

*Uſh.* Pray walk to the Buttery, Gentlemen. My Office leads you thither.

*Ol.* Thanks, good Maſter Uſher.

*Uſh.* I have been Uſher theſe twenty years, *Sir*. And have got well by my place, for uſing *Strangers* reſpectfully.

*Ol.* He has given the Hint too.

*Uſh.* Something has come in by the by, beſides ſtanding wages, which is ever duly paid (thank a good Maſter, and an honeſt *Steward* (Heaven bleſſe 'hem. We all thrive under 'em.

*Enter Butler with Glaſſes and a Napkin.*

O here comes the Butler.

*But.* You are welcome, Gentlemen. Pleaſe yee draw nearer my Office, and take a morning Drink in a Cup of Sack, if it pleaſe you.

*Ol.* In what pleaſe you, Sir. We cannot deny the curteſie of the Houſe, in the Maſters abſence.

*But.* Hee'l come apace when he comes. Hee's no *Snayle*, Sir. *Going.*

*Ol.* Still 'tis the houſe-word. And all the Servants wear Livery Beards.

*But.* Or perhaps you had rather drink Whitewine and Sugar. Pleaſe your ſelves, Gentlemen; here you may taſte all Liquors. No Gentlemans houſe in all this Country, or the next, ſo well ſtor'd (--- make us thankful for it.) And my Maſter, for his Hoſpitality to Gentlemen, his Charity to the poor, and his bounty to his Servants, has not his Peer in the Kingdom (—make us thankful for it.) And 'tis as fortunate a houſe for Servants, as ever was built upon *Faery-Ground.* I my ſelf, that have ſerv'd here, Man, and Boy, theſe four and forty years, have gotten together (beſides ſomething, more then I will ſpeak of, diſtributed among my poor Kindred) by my Wages, my Vails at *Chriſtmas*, and otherwiſe, together with my Rewards of kind Gentlemen, that have found courteous entertainment here——

*Ol.* There he is too.

*But.* Have, I ſay, gotten together (tho' in a dangerous time I ſpeak it) a brace of hundred pounds —— Make me thankful for it. And for loſſes, I have had none. I have been Butler theſe two and thirty years, and never loſt the value of a ſilver Spoon, nor ever broke a Glaſſe——Make me thankfull for it. White Wine and Sugar, ſay you Sir?

*Ol.* Pleaſe your ſelf, Sir.

*But.* This Gentleman ſpeaks not. Or had you rather take a Drink of brown Ale with a Toaſt, or March Beer with Sugar and Nutmeg? or had you rather drink without Sugar?

*Ol.* Good Sir, a Cup of your Houſhold-Beer. *Exit But.* I fear he will draw down to that at laſt.

*Enter Butler with a Silver Can of Sack.*

*But.* Here Gentlemen, is a Cup of my Maſters ſmall Beer:

But

But it is good old *Canary*, I assure you. And here's to your welcome. *Enter Cook.*

*Cook.* And welcome the Cook sayes, Gentlemen. Brother Butler, lay a Napkin, I'll fetch a Cut of the *Surloyn* to strengthen your patience till my Master comes, who will not now belong, for he's no *Snayle*, Gentlemen.

*Ol.* I have often heard so. And here's to you, Master Cook—Prithee speak, Master *Talboy*, or force one Laugh more, if thou canst.

*Cook.* Sir, the Cook drinks to you. *To Talb.*

*Tal.* Ha ha ha———

*Ol.* Well said.

*Tal.* He is in the same Livory-Beard too!

*Coo.* But he is the oldest Cook, and of the ancientest House, and the best for House-keeping, in this County, or the next. And tho' the Master of it write but *Squire*, I know no Lord like him.

*Enter Chaplain.*

And now he's come. Here comes the *Word* before him. The *Parson* has ever the best stomack. I'll Dish away presently. *Exit*

*But.* Is our Master come, Sir *Domine*?

*Chap. Est ad Manum. Non est ille testudo.*

*Ol.* He has the Word too in *Latine*. Now bear up *Talboy.*

*Cha.* Give me a Preparative of *Sack*. It is a gentle Preparative before Meat, And so a gentle touch of it to you Gentlemen.

*Ol.* It is a gentle Offer, Sir; and as gently to be taken.

*Enter Oldrents and Hearty.*

*Old.* About with it, my Lads. And this is as it should be ——Not till my turn, Sir, I. Though I confesse, I have had but three Morning-draughts to day.

*Ol.* Yet it appears you were abroad betimes, Sir.

*Old.* I am no *Snayle*, Sir.

*Ol.* So your men told us, Sir.

*Old.* But where be my *Catchers*? Come a *Round*. And so let us drink.

*The Catch sung. And they drink about. The Singers are all Graybeards.*

A *Round, a Round, a Round, Boyes, a Round.*
*Let Mirth fly aloft, and Sorrow be drown'd.*

*Old* Sack *and old* Songs, *and a merry old* Crew,
*Can charm away* Cares *when the Ground looks* blew.

*Old.* Well ſaid old *Hearty*. And, Gentlemen, welcome.

*Tal.* Ah —— *He ſighs.*

*Old.* Oh mine ears! VVhat was that a ſigh? And in my Houſe? Look: has it not ſplit my VValls? if not, make vent for it: Let it out: *I* ſhall be ſtifled elſe. *Exit. Chap.*

*Ol.* He hopes your pardon, Sir: his Cauſe conſider'd.

*Old.* Cauſe! Can there be cauſe for ſighing?

*Ol.* He has loſt his *Miſtriſs*, ſir.

*Old.* Ha ha ha. *Is* that a Cauſe? Do you hear me complain the loſſe of my two Daughters?

*Ol.* They are not loſt *I* hope, ſir.

*Old.* No more can be his *Miſtris*. No Woman can be loſt. They may be miſ-laid a little: but found again, *I* warrant you.

*Tal.* Ah —— *Sigh.*

*Old.* Ods my life! He ſighs again: And means to blow me out of my houſe. To Horſe again. Here's no dwelling for me. Or ſtay: I'll cure him, if I can. Give him more Sack, to drown his Suſpirations.

*While* Oldrents *and* Talboy *drink*, Oliver *takes* Hearty *aſide.*

*Ol.* Sir, I am chiefly to inform you of the Diſaſter.

*Hea.* May it concern me?

*Ol.* Your Nephew *Martin* has ſtolne my Fathers Ward, that Gentlemans *Bride* that ſhould have been.

*Hea.* Indeed, *Sir.*

*Ol.* 'Tis moſt true —— *He gives* Hearty *a Letter.*

*Hea.* Another Glaſſe of *Sack*. This Gentleman brings good news.

*Ol. Sir*, if you can prevent his danger ——

*Hea.* Hang all Preventions. Let 'em have their Deſtiny.

*Tal. Sir*, *I* ſhould have had her, 'tis true —— *To*
But ſhe is gone, d'ee ſee? And let her go. *Oldrents,*

*Old.* Well ſaid. He mends now.

*Tal. I* am glad *I* am rid of her (d'ee ſee) before *I* had more to do with her ——

*Hea.* He mends apace.

*Hearty*

Hearty reads the Letter.

*Tal.* For ſhould I have maried her before ſhe had run away, d'ee ſee: And that ſhe had run away (d'ee ſee) after ſhe had been maried to me (d'ee ſee.) Then I had been a maried Man without a Wife (d'ee ſee.) Where now ſhe being run away before I am maried (d'ee ſee) I am no more maried to her, d'ee ſee, than ſhe to me, d'ee ſee. And ſo long as I am none of hers (d'ee ſee) nor ſhe none of mine (d'ee ſee) I ought to care as little for her, now ſhe is run away (d'ee ſee) as if ſhe had ſtay'd with me, d'ee ſee.

*Old.* Why this is excellent! Come hither *Hearty*.

*Tal.* I perceive it now; and the reaſon of it; And how, by Conſequence (d'ee ſee) I ought not to look any further after. *Cryes.* But that ſhe ſhould reſpect a poor baſe fellow, a Cleark at the moſt, and a Serving-man at beſt, before me, that am a rich man, at the worſt, and a Gentleman, at leaſt, makes me--- I know not what to ſay---

*Old.* VVorſe than ever 'twas! Now he cries out-right.

*Tal.* I know not what to ſay——— VVhat to ſay——— Oh-——

*Hea.* Then I do, Sir. The poor baſe fellow, that you ſpeak of, is my Nephew: As good a Gentleman as your ſelf. I underſtand the buſineſs by your Friend here.

*Tal.* I cry you mercy, Sir.

*Old.* You ſhall cry no Mercy, nor any thing elſe here, Sir; nor for any thing here, Sir. This is no place to cry in: Nor for any buſineſs. You, Sir, that come on buſineſs-- *To Ol.*

*Ol.* It ſhall be none, Sir.

*Old.* My Houſe is for no buſineſſe, but the Belly-buſineſs. You find not me ſo uncivil, Sir, as to ask you from whence you came; who you are; or what's your buſineſs. I ask you no queſtion. And can you be ſo diſcourteous, as to tell me, or my Friend, any thing like buſineſſe. If you come to be merry with Me, you are welcome. If you have any buſineſs forget it: You forget where you are elſe. And ſo to Dinner.

*Hea.* Sir, I pray let me onely prevail with you but to read this---

*Old.* Spoyle my Stomack now, and I'll not eat this fortnight. *He reads aſide.* H.a.

*Hea.* While he reads let me tell you, Sir. That my Nephew *Martin* has ſtolne that Gentlemans Miſtriſs, it ſeems, is true. But *I* proteſt, as I am a Gentleman, *I* know nothing of the matter; nor where he or ſhe is. But, as *I* am the foreſaid Gentleman, *I* am glad on't with all my heart. Ha, my Boy *Mat:* Thou ſhalt reſtore our *Houſe*.

*Ol.* Let him not hear, to grieve him, Sir.

*Hea.* Grieve him? What ſhould he do with her; teach their Children to cry?

*Tal.* But *I* do hear you though; and *I* ſcorn to cry, as much as you, d'ee ſee, or your Nephew either, d'ee ſee.

*Hea.* Now thou art a brave fellow. So, ſo, hold up thy head, and thou ſhalt have a Wife, and a fine Thing.

*Tal.* Hang a Wife; and Pax o'your fine Thing (d'ee ſee) *I* ſcorn your Fopperies, d'ee ſee.

*Old.* And *I* do hear thee my Boy; and rejoyce in thy converſion. *If* thou canſt but hold now.

*Tal.* Yes, *I* can hold, Sir. And *I* hold well with your *Sack*. *I* could live and die with it, as *I* am true *Talboy*.

*Old.* Now thou art a tall fellow; and ſhalt want no *Sack*.

*Tal.* And, Sir, *I* do honour you (d'ee ſee) and ſhould wiſh my ſelf one of your Houſhold Servants (d'ee ſee) if *I* had but a gray Beard, d'ee ſee? *Hay*, as old Maſter *Clack* ſayes.

*Old.* Well, *I* have read the buſineſs here.

*Ol.* Call it not buſineſſe, *I* beſeech you, Sir. We defie all buſineſſe.

*Tal.* *I* marry do we, Sir. D'ee ſee, Sir? And a *Hay*, as old Maſter *Clack* ſayes.

*Old.* Grammercy *Sack*. Well, I have read the Matter here written by Maſter *Clack*. And do but bear up in thy humour, *I* will wait upon thee home.

*Knock within.*

Hark! they knock to the Dreſſer. *I* have heard much of this old od-ceited Juſtice *Clack*: And now *I* long to ſee him. 'Tis but croſſing the Countrey two dayes and a nights Journey. We'll but dine and away preſently. Bear up, I ſay, Maſter *Talboy*.

*Tal.* I will bear up, *I* warrant you, dee ſee, Sir——But here's a grudging ſtill——

*Exeunt.*

Scena

*Scena Secunda.*

*A great noyſe within of rude Muſick, Laughing, Singing, &c.*

*Enter Amie. Rachel. Moriel.*

*Am.* HEre's a Wedding with a witneſſe, and a Holy-day with a hoigh. Let us out of the noiſe, as we love our ears.

*Ra.* Yes: and here we may purſue our own Diſcourſe, and hear one another.

*Mer.* Concerning *Springlove* and your ſelf, Miſtris *Amie*.

*Am.* Well, Ladies, my confidence in you, that you are the ſame that you have proteſted your ſelves to be, hath ſo far won upon me, that *I* confeſſe my ſelf well-affected both to the Minde and Perſon of that *Springlove*: And, if he be (as fairly you pretend) a *Gentleman*, I ſhall eaſily diſpence with *Fortune*.

*Ra. Me.* He is, upon our *Honours*.

*Am.* How well that high Ingagement ſuits your Habits.

*Ra.* Our Minds and Blood are ſtill the ſame.

*Am.* I have paſt no affiance to the other,
That ſtole me from my Guardian, and the Match
He would have forc'd me to: From which I would
Have fled with any, or without a Guide.
Beſides, his mind, more Clowniſh than his Habit,
Deprav'd by Covetouſneſſe and Cowardiſe,
Forc'd me into a way of miſery,
To take relief from *Beggars*.

*Mer.* From poor Us.

*Am.* And then, to offer to marry me under a Hedge, as the old Couple were to day, without Book or Ring, by the Chaplain of the *Beggars* Regiment, your *Patrico*, only to ſave Charges.

*Ra.* I have not ſeen the Wretch theſe three hours, whither is he gone?

*Am.* He told me, to fetch Horſe and fit Rayment for us; and ſo to poſt me hence: But I think it was to leave me on your hands.

*Mer.* He has taken some great distaste sure: For he is damnable jealous.

*Ra. I*, didst thou mark what a wilde look he cast, when *Springlove* tumbled her, and kist her on the Straw this morning, while the Musick plaid to the old VVedding-Folks?

*Mer.* Yes, and then *Springlove*, to make him madder, told him, that he would be his *Proxie*, and marry her for him, and lye with her the first night, with a naked Cudgell betwixt 'em, and make him a King of *Beggars*:

*Am.* I saw how it anger'd him. And I imagin'd then, and before, that there was more in *Springlove*, then downright *Beggar*. But tho' he be never so good a Gentleman, he shall observe fit time and distance till we are maried.

*Ra.* Matrimony forbid else. (She's taken) But while we talk of a Match towards, we are mist within in the *Bride-Barn* among the *Revell rout*.

*Am.* We have had all the sport they can make us, in the past passages.

*Mer.* How cautious the old contracted Couple were for Portion and Joincture!

*Ra.* What Feoffees, she being an Heir of fourscore, (and seven years stone-blind) had, in trust for her Estate.

*Am.* And how carefully he secur'd all to himself, in case he out-liv'd her, being but seven years older than she. And what paines the Lawyer of the Rout here, took about it.

*Ra.* And then, how solemnly they were joyn'd, and admonish'd, by our *Parson Under-hedge*, to live together in the fear of the Lash, and give good example to the younger Reprobates, to beg within compasse, to escape the jaws of the Justice, the Clutch of the Constable, the Hooks of the Headborough, and the biting blows of the Beadle. And, in so doing, they should defie the Devil, and all his Works, and after their painfull Pilgrimage in this life, they should die in the Ditch of Delight.

*Mer.* O but Poet *Serible's Epithalamium*:

*TO the blinde Virgin of fourscore,*
*And the lame Batchelor, of more,*

*How*

*How* Cupid *gave her Eyes to see,*
*And* Vulcan *lent him Legs:*
*How* Venus *caus'd their Sport to be*
*Prepar'd with butter'd Egs.*
*Yet when she shall be seven years wed,*
*She shall be bold to say,*
*She has as much her Maiden-head,*
*As on her Wedding day.*

*Ra.* So may some Wives that were maried at sixteen, to Lads of one and twenty.

*Am.* But at the Wedding-Feast, when the Bride bridled it, and her Groom sadled it. There was the sport, in her Mumping, and his Champing; the *Crew* scrambling; our selves trembling; then the confusion of Noyses, in talking, laughing, scolding, singing, howling; with their Actions, of snatching, scratching, towsing and lowsing themselves, and one another——

*Enter Springlove, Vincent, and Hilliard.*

But who comes here?

*Spr.* O, Ladies, you have lost as much Mirth, as would have fill'd up a week of Holy-daies.

Springlove *takes* Amie *aside, and courts her in a gentile way.*

*Vin.* I am come about agen for the *Beggars* life now.

*Ra.* You are. I am glad on't.

*Hil.* There is no life but it.

*Vin.* With them there is no Grievance or Perplexity;
No fear of war, or State Disturbances.
No Alteration in a Common-wealth,
Or Innovation, shakes a Thought of theirs.

*Mer.* Of ours you should say.

*Hil.* Of ours, he means.

We have no fear of lessening our Estates;
Nor any grudge with us (without Taxation)
To lend or give, upon command, the whole
Strength of our Wealth for publick Benefit:
While some that are held rich in their Abundance,

(Which is their Misery, indeed) will see
Rather a general ruine upon all,
Then give a scruple to prevent the Fall.

*Vin.* 'Tis only we that live.

*Ra.* I'm glad you are so taken with your Calling.

*Mer.* We are no lesse, I assure you. We find the Sweetness of it now.

*Ra.* The Mirth, the pleasure, the Delights. No Ladies live such Lives.

*Mer.* Some few, upon necessity, perhaps. But that's not worth g'rammercy.

*Vin.* They will never be weary.

*Hil.* Whether we seem to like, or dislike, all's one to them.

*Vin.* We must do something to be taken by, and discovered, we shall never be our selves, and get home again else.

Spr. *and* Amie *come to the rest.*

*Spr.* I am yours for ever. Well Ladies, you have mist rare sport; but now the Bride has mist you with her half-half eye; and the Bridegroom, with the help of his Crutches, is drawing her forth for a Daunce, here, in the opener aire. The House is now too hot for 'em. O, here come the chief Revellers. The *Souldier*, the *Courtier*, the *Lawyer*, and the *Poet*, who is Master of their Revels, before the old Couple in State. Attend, and here him speak, as their Inductor.

Poet.

*HEre on this* Green, *like* King *and* Queen,
(*For a short truce*) *we do produce*
*Our old new-married Pair.*
*Of* Dish *and* Wallet, *and of* Straw-pallet
*With Rags to show, from top to toe,*
*She is the ancient* Heire.

*He is the Lord of* Bottle-gourd,
*Of* Sachell *great, for Bread and Meat,*
*And, for small Pence, a Purse.*
*To all that give, Long may you live*
*He loudly cries: But who denyes*
*Is sure to have his Curse.*

*Vin.* Well ſaid Field-Poet. *Phœbus*, we ſee, inſpires
As well the *Beggar*, as the *Poet Laureat.*

*Spr.* And ſhines as warm under a Hedg bottom, as on the tops of *Palaces.*

*Po.* I have not done yet. Now this is to incite you to daunce.

*Prepare your ſelves, like* Faery Elves,
*Now in a* Daunce *to ſhow*,
*That you approve, the God of Love*
*Has many* Shafts *to's* Bow:

*With Golden head, and ſome of Lead*,
*But that which made theſe feel*,
*By ſubtle craft, was ſure a* Shaft
*That headed was with Steel.*

*For they were old; no Earth more cold*;
*Their Hearts were Flints intire*;
*Whence the Steels ſtroak did ſparks provoke*,
*That ſet their Bloods on fire.*

*Now ſtrike up Pipers; and each Lover here*
*Be blith, and take his Miſtris by the Goll.*

*Hil.* That's no Rime, *Poet.*

*Po.* There's as good *Poetry* in blank Verſe, as Metree.

*Muſick.*

*Spr.* Come, hay! the Daunce, the Daunce. Nay we'll ha' the *old Couple* in, as blind and lame as they are.

*Bri.* What will you ſo? *Daunce.*

*Spr.* Well hobled *Bridegroom*!

*Vin.* Well grop'd *Bride*!

*Hil.* Hay luſty. *Hay Holy day.*

*Spr.* Set 'hem down; ſet 'em down: They ha' done well.

*Gro.* A ha! Iam luſtier than I was 30 years ago.

*Bri.* And I, than I was threeſcore paſt. A hem, a hemh.

*Vin.* What a night here's towards!

*Hil.* Sure they will kill one another.

*Po.* Each with a fear the tother will live longeſt.

*Spr.* Poet thou haſt ſpoken learnedly, and acted bravely. Thou art both *Poet* and *Actor*.

*Po.* So has been many famous men. And if here were no worſe, we might have a *Maſque*, or a *Comedie* preſented to night, in honour of the *old Couple*.

*Vin.* Let us each man try his ability
Upon ſome *Subject* now *extempore*.

*Spr.* Agreed. Give us a Theme; and try our Action.

*Po.* I have already thought upon't. I want but Actors.

*Hil.* What perſons want you? what would you preſent?

*Po.* I would preſent a Commonwealth; *Utopia*,
With all her Branches and Conſiſtencies.

*Ra.* I'll be *Utopia*; who muſt be my *Branches*?

*Po.* The *Country*, the *City*, the *Court*, and the *Camp*. Epitomiz'd and perſonated by a *Gentleman*, a *Merchant*, a *Courtier*, and a *Souldier*.

*Soul.* I'll be your *Souldier*. Am not I one? ha!

*Cou.* And am not I a faſhionable *Courtier*?

*Po.* But who the *Citizen*, or *Merchant*.

*Spr.* I. *Vin.* And I your *Country Gentleman*.

*Hil.* Or I.

*Po.* Yet to our Moral *I* muſt adde two Perſons, *Divinity* and *Law*.

*La.* Why la you now. And am not *I* a *Lawyer*?

*Po* But where's *Divinity*?

*Vin.* Mary that *I* know not. One of us might do that, if either knew how to handle it.

*Spr.* Where's the old *Patrico*, our Prieſt, my Ghoſtly Father? He'll do it rarely.

1. *Beg.* He was telling Fortunes e'ne now to Countrey Wenches. *I'll* fetch him——— *Exit.*

*Spr.* That *Patrico* I wonder at: He has told me ſtrange things in clouds.

*Am.* And me ſomewhat that *I* may tell you hereafter.

*Spr.* That you ſhall be my Bride?

*Am. I* will not tell you now.

*Vin.* Well: but what muſt our Speeches tend to? what muſt we do one with another?

*Po.* I would have the *Country*, the *City*, and the *Court*, be at great variance for *Superiority*. Then would I have *Divinity* and

and *Law* ſtretch their wide throats to appeaſe and reconcile them: Then would I have the *Souldier* cudgel them all together, and overtop them all. Stay, yet I want another Perſon.

*Hil.* VVhat muſt he be?

*Po.* A *Beggar*.

*Vin.* Here's enough of us, *I* think. VVhat muſt the *Beggar* do?

*Po.* He muſt at laſt, overcome the *Souldier*; and bring them all to *Beggars-Hall*. And this, well acted, will be for the honour of our Calling.

*All.* A *Scribble*! A *Scribble*!

*Hill.* Come where's this *Patrico*, that we may begin?

*Enter Patrico.*

*Pa.* Alack and welladay, this is no time to play.
Our Quarter is beſet. VVe are all in the Net.
Leave off your merry Glee.

*Vin.* You begin ſcurvily.

*Spr.* VVhy what's the Matter?

*Within. Bing awaſt, bing awaſt.* The *Quire Cove* and the *Harmanbeck*.

*Some Beggars run over the Stage.*

*Spr.* VVe are beſet indeed. V What ſhall we do?

*Vin.* I hope we ſhall be taken.

*Hill.* If the good hour be come, welcome by the grace of good Fortune.

*Enter* Sentwell, *Conſtable, Watch. The Crew ſlip away.*

*Sent.* Beſet the Quarter round. Be ſure that none eſcape.

*Spr. Lord to come with you, bleſſed Maſter, to a many diſtreſſed*——

*Vin, Hill. Duly and truly pray for you.*

*Ra. Mer. Good your good Worſhip, duly and truly, &c.*

*Sen.* A many counterfeit Rogues! So frolick and ſo lamentable all in a breath? You were acting a Play but now, We'll act with you: Incorrigible Vagabonds.

*Spr.* Good Maſter, 'tis a *Holy-day* with us. An *Heire* was married here to day.

*Sen.* Married! Not ſo I hope. Where is ſhe? 'Tis for an *Heire* we ſeek.

*Spr.*

*Spr.* Here she is Master——Hide your selves in the Straw——the Straw. Quickly into the Straw——

*Spr.* What tell'st thou me of this? And old blind *Beggar-woman.* VVe must find a young *Gentlewoman-Heire* among you. VVhere's all the rest of the *Crew.*

*Con.* Slipt into the Barn and the Bushes by: but none can scape.

*Sen.* Look you to that, and to these here.

*Exit with Watch.*

*Spr.* Into the Straw I say.

*Vin.* No, good *Springlove.* The Ladies and we are agreed now to draw stakes, and play this lowsie Game no further.

*Hill.* VVe will be taken, and disclose our selves. You see we shall be forc'd to it else. The cowardly Cleark has don't to save himself.

*Spr.* Do you fear no shame, Ladies?

*Ra.* Dost think it a shame to leave Begging?

*Mer.* Or that our Father will turn us out to it again?

*Spr.* Nay, since you are so resolute, Know, that I my self begin to find this is no course for *Gentlemen.* This *Lady* shall take me offit.

*Am.* Make but your Protestations good, and take me yours. And for the Gentleman that surprises us, tho' he has all my Uncles trust, he shall do any thing for me to our advantage.

*Vin.* If, *Springlove* thou could'st post now to thy Tyring-house, and fetch all our Cloaths, we might get off most neatly.

*Spr.* A Horse and six hours Travel would do that.

*Am.* You shall be furnisht, doubt not.

*Enter* Sentwell. *Watch.*

*Sent.* She's scap'd, or is invisible. You Sir, I take to be the chief *Rogue* of this *Regiment.* Let him be whipt till he brings forth the *Heire.*

*Con.* That is but till he stinks, Sir. Come, Sir, strip, strip.

*Am.* Unhand him, Sir. What *Heire* do you seek Master *Sentwell*?

*Sent.* Precious, how did my hast oversee her? O Mistris *Amie*! Could I, or your Uncle, Justice *Clack*, a wiser man than I, ever ha' thought to have found you in such company?

*Am.*

*Am.* Of me, Sir, and my company, *I* have a ſtory to delight you: which on our March towards your Houſe, *I* will relate to you.

*Sent.* And thither will *I* lead you as my Gueſt
But to the Law ſurrender all the reſt.
I'll make your peace.

*Am.* We muſt fare all alike. *Exeunt.*

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## *Actus Quintus.*

*Clack. Martin.*

*Cla.* I Have forgiven you. Provided that my Neece be ſafely taken; and ſo to be brought home. Safely I ſay, that is to ſay, unſtain'd, unblemiſh'd, undiſhohour'd; that is to ſay, with no more faults, criminal, or accuſative, than thoſe ſhe carried with her.

*Mar.* Sir, I believe——

*Cla.* Nay, if we both ſpeak together, how ſhall we hear one another? you believe her Vertue is Armour of proof, without your Councel, or your Guard; and therefore you left her in the hands of Rogues and Vagabonds, to make your own Peace with me. You have it. Provided, I ſay (as I ſaid before) that ſhe be ſafe, that is to ſay, uncorrupted, undefiled; that is to ſay —— as I ſaid before.

*Mar.* Mine intent, Sir, and my only way ——

*Cla.* Nay, if we both ſpeak together, how ſhall we hear one another? as I ſaid before. Your intent, and your only way, you would ha' ſaid, was to run away with her; and that by her only Inſtigation, to avoid the tye of Marriage with Maſter *Talboy*; that is to ſay, to ſhun the Match, that I hade for her; that is to ſay, rather to diſobey me, than to diſpleaſe her ſelf. VVherein (altho' ſhe did not altogether tranſgreſſe the Law) ſhe did both offend and prejudice me, an Inſtrument; nay, *I* may ſay, a Pillar thereof. And you, in aſſiſting her, furthering, and conveying her away, did not only infringe the Law, in an unlawful Departure from your Maſter, but in a higher point; that is to ſay, *Top*, *and top-*

*Gallows high.* I would, he'ſound a Jury ſhould ha'found it ſo.

*Mar.* But Sir, an't pleaſe you.

*Cla.* Muſt we then both ſpeak together? Have I not born with thee, to ſpeak all thou pleaſeſt in thy defence? Have I not broke mine own Rule, which is, to puniſh before I examine; and ſo to have the Law the ſurer o' my ſide? And doſt thou ſtill perſiſt? Hold your own peace; or, as I am a Juſtice of the Kings, I will unſay what I ſaid before, and ſet a *Curat Lex* at you, Sirrah, that ſhall courſe you up the heavy Hill. Oh, is your Tongue fallen into your Leg now? Do not you know I have acquitted you? Provided —— As I ſaid before. Go your way in, and ſee that the Gentlemen, who, I think, were got in *Sack*, chriſtned in *Sack*, nurſed with *Sack*, and fed up to gray hairs with only *Sack*; ſee, I ſay, that they want no *Sack*. My Son *Oliver* (I thank him) has brought me a pair of ſuch Gueſts.

*Enter Sentwell.*

O Maſter *Sentwell!* Good News?

*Sen* Of beggarly news, the beſt you have heard.

*Cla.* That is to ſay, you have found my Neece among the *Beggars*. That is to ſay ——

*Sen.* True Sir *Oliver*, I found her ——

*Cla.* Now if we both ſpeak together, who ſhall hear one another?

*Sen.* I thought your deſire was to be inform'd.

*Cla.* I can inform my ſelf, Sir, by your looks. I have taken a hundred Examinations i' my dayes of Fellons, and other Offendors, out of their very Countenances; and wrought 'em down *verbatim*, to what they would have ſaid. I am ſure it has ſerv'd to hang ſome of'em, and whip the reſt.

*Sen.* Juſtice *Clack* ſtill! He muſt talk all. His Clack muſt only go.

*Cla.* But to the point. You have found my Neece. You have left her at your own Houſe; not only to ſhift her out of her Diſguiſe, but out of her ſhame, to come nearer me, untill I ſend her pardon.

*Sen.* Moſt true, Sir. But the Company ſhe was in ——

*Cla.* Again! Do not I know the Company? *Beggars*, *Rogues*, *Vagabones*, and *Hedge-birds*.

*Sen.*

*Sen.* But do you know whom, or how many we have taken? and how the reſt eſcap'd?

*Cla.* A needleſſe knowledge. Why ſhould we take more than her ſelf? Or how could you take thoſe that could eſcape?

*Enter Martin.*

*Mar.* Sir, the Old Gentlemen within, ſent me to wait upon you. Without you (they ſay) they need not my Service.

*Cla.* Tell 'em then, I'll wait on 'em preſently. *Exit Martin.*

*Sen.* But Sir, we have taken with her ſuch *Beggars*, ſuch *Rogues*, ſuch *Vagabonds*, and ſuch *Hedge-birds* (ſince you call 'em ſo) as you never knew, or heard of, though now the Countries ſwarm with 'em under every Hedge, as if an innumerable Army of 'em were lately disbanded without Pay. *Hedge-birds* ſaid you? *Hedge Lady-birds*, *Hedge Cavaliers*, *Hedge Souldier*, *Hedge Lawyer*, *Hedge Fidlers*, *Hedge Poet*, *Hedge Players*, and a *Hedge Prieſt* among 'em. Such we have taken for the *Principals*. But to ſee how the Multitude ſcap'd us, was more ſport than pitty. How, upon a watch-word given, they in the inſtant vaniſh'd by more ſeveral wayes than there were legs among 'em; how the Creeples leap'd over Pales and Hedges; how the Blinde found their way thorow Lakes and Ditches; how a *Doxie* flew with two Children at her back, and two more, perhaps, in her belly ——

*Cla.* A *Hedge Prieſt* have you taken, ſay you?

*Sen.* Yes, Sir, an old *Patrico*, an antient Prophet, to tell Fortunes, and cozen our poor Country People of their ſingle Money.

*Enter Oliver.*

*Ol.* Sir, Maſter *Oldrents*, in that he injoyes not your company, begins to doubt of his welcome.

*Cla.* Who led him into that doubt? I, or you that brought him hither?

*Ol.* Sir, his own deſire, and love to you, brought him hither. I but ſhew'd him the way

*Cla.* You reaſon fairly. Tell him I come.

*Ol.* Pray, Sir, be pleas'd to do ſo, for he ſayes ——

*Cla.* Say, if we both talk together ——

*Ol.* Who shall hear one another. *Exit Oliver.*

*Cla.* But are there *Players* among the apprehended?

*Sen.* Yes, Sir. And they were contriving to act a Play among themselves, just as we surpriz'd 'em, and spoyl'd their Sport.

*Cla. Players!* I'll pay them above all the rest.

*Sen.* You shall do well in that; to put 'em in stock to set up again.

*Cla.* Yes, I'll put 'em in Stocks, and set 'em up to the Whipping-post. They can act *Justices*, can they? I'll act a *Justice* among 'em; that is to say, I will do justice upon them; that is to say ——

*Sen.* Pray Sir, be not severe, they act *Kings* and *Emperours*, as well as *Justices*. And *Justice* is blinde they say: you may therefore be pleas'd to wink a little. I find that you have merry old Gentlemen in your House, that are come far to visit you. I'll undertake that these *Players*, with the help of their *Poet*; in a device which they have already studied, and a pack of Cloaths which I shall supply 'em with, shall give your Guests much content, and move compassion in you towards the poor *Strowles*.

*Cla.* But you know my way of *Justice* (and that's a sure way) is to punish 'em first, and be compassionate afterwards, as I finde 'em upon their Examination.

*Sen.* But for your Guests sake, who (I know) do favour and affect the Quality of Actors very much, permit 'em, Sir. It will inlarge your Entertainment exceedingly.

*Cla.* And perhaps save me the expence of a Renlet of *Sack* the while. Well, Sir, for that Respect, and upon your undertaking that they shall please, I will prorogue my *Justice* on the *Rogues*. And so to my merry Gentlemen, whom I will prepare to see their *Enterlude* against after Supper. But pray, Master *Sentwell*, as you have found my Neece, look to her, and see her decently brought home.

*Sen.* In her own best Apparell. But you must prorogue your displeasure to her too.

*Cla.* I will do so, untill my scarce welcome *Guests* be gone.

*Enter Randall.*

*Ran.* Sir, my Master sends you word, and plainly, that without

without your Company, your Entertainment ſtinks. He has commanded me ſaddle his Nags, and away to night. If you come not at once, twice, thrice, he's gone preſently, before Supper; He'll find an Hoſt at an Inne worth a hundred o' you.

*Cla.* Good friend, I will now ſatisfie your Maſter, without telling him he has a ſawcy Knave to his Man. *Exit Clack.*

*Ran.* Thank your Worſhip.

*Sen.* Do you hear, Friend, you ſerve Maſter *Oldrents.*

*Ran.* I could ha' told you that. And the beſt Houſe-keeper my Maſter is of any Gentleman in the *County* he dwells in; and the beſt Maſter to a man, as I, the worſt of twenty, can ſay for him, and would be aſham'd to ſay leſs.

*Sen.* Your name is *Randall.*

*Ran.* Forgi' me! Are you ſo wiſe? you are too young to be my *Godſire.* And I hope not old enough to be a Witch. How know you, that I am *Randall?* were you ever at my Maſters Houſe i' *Nottingham-ſhire*, or at *Dunghilford*, where I was born?

*Sen.* No. But I have Notes to know you by.

*Ran.* I was never twelve mile from thence i' my life, before this Journey. God ſend me within ken of our own Kitching ſmoak again.

*Sen.* Your Maſters Stewards name is *Springlove.*

*Ran.* Maſter *Springlove*, an't pleaſe you. There is not an honeſter Gentleman between this and the head of him. And my heart's with him, where e're he is. Know you him too?

*Sen.* Yes, and your Maſters Daughters too.

*Ran.* Whaw.

*Sen.* And that they are all from home, your Maſter knows not where.

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw. Know you that too?

*Sen.* Yes, and the two young Gentlemen that are with 'em, Maſter *Vincent*, and Maſter *Hilliard.*

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw again. You know 'em all, I think. But know you where they all are?

*Sen.* Even here by, at my own Houſe.

*Ran.* Whaw ——

*Sen.* And they knowing that your Maſter is here, and Maſter *Hearty* too ——

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw.

*Sen.* And your ſelf too. They directed me to find you, *Randall*, and bring you to 'em.

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw, whaw, whaw. —— Why do we not go then.

*Sen.* But ſecretly. Not a word to any body.

*Ran.* Mum —— Will you go then.

*Enter Martin.*

*Mar.* O, Maſter *Oldrent*'s man. Pray let me intreat you into the Buttery.

*Ran.* Will you go, Maſter *Gentleman?*

*Mar.* Indeed it is my Maſters deſire, and he commanded me.

*Ran.* Now, when it's Supper-time did he? to fill my belly with thin drink to ſave his Meat? It's the manner in Churles Houſes. Will you go, Maſter *Gentleman?*

*Mar.* Introth my Maſter is ſo merry with yours within ——

*Ran.* Shite o' your Maſter. My Maſter's Steward's a better man. I'll to him, at this Gentleman's Houſe, and all the reſt. Whaw, whaw.

*Sen. Randal*, you forget.

*Ran.* Mum again then. Why would you not go then?

*Exit Sent.* and *Rand.*

*Mar.* The man's as mad as his Maſter. The ſtrangeſt ſtranger that ever came to our Houſe.

*Enter Talboy.*

*Tal.* Well, *Martin*, for confeſſing thy fault, and the means thou mad'ſt whereby ſhe is taken, I am friends with thee. But I ſhall never look upon her, or thee---but with grief of minde, however I bear it outwardly. Oh---

*Mar.* You bear it very manfully methinks.

*Tal.* I, you think ſo, and I know ſo--- But what I feel, I feel. Would one of us two had never ſeen one another--- Oh---

*Mar.* You ſpeak very good ſenſe, Sir. But do's my Maſter continue his merry humour with the old Gentlemen within.

*Tal.* Yes. Juſtice *Clack*'s Clack go's as merrily as any.

*Mar.* VVell ſaid, ſir. Now you ſpeak merrily too. But

I could

I could ſay ſomewhat that would ſtill him. And for your comfort, I'll tell you. Miſtris *Amie* is fallen in love with one of the *Beggars*.

*Tal.* Then have I nothing elſe to do, but to laugh at thee as long as I live. Ha ha ha—— To let a *Beggar* cozen thee of her. Ha ha ha. A *Beggar*! I ſhall dye merrily yet. Ha ha ha.

*Enter Clack, Oldrents, Hearty, Oliver.*

*Cla.* A *hay* Boys, a *hay*. This is right; that is to ſay, as I would have it; that is to ſay——

*Tal.* A *Beggar*. Ha ha ha——

*Mar.* Ha ha ha——

*Cla.* A *hay* Boyes, a *hay*. They are as merry without, as we were within. A *hay*, Maſter *Oldrents*, and *Maſter Hearty!* The vertue of your Company turns all to Mirth and Melody, with a *hay trololly lolly lolly*. Is't not ſo, Maſter *Hearty?*

*Old.* VVhy thus it ſhould be: How was I deceiv'd! Now I ſee you are a good Fellow.

*Ol.* He was never ſo before. If it be a Lightning before Death, the beſt is, I am his Heir.

*Tal: Mar.* Ha, ha ha——

*Cla.* Again, Boyes, again; that is to ſay, a *hay Boyes, a hay*——

*Hea.* What is the Motive of your Mirth, Nephew *Martin*? Let us laugh with you.

*Old.* Was that ſpoke like my Friend, *Hearty*? Lack we motives to laugh? Are not all things, any thing, every thing to be laugh'd at? And if nothing were to be ſeen, felt, heard, or underſtood, we would laugh at it too.

*Cla.* You take the loſſe of your Miſtris merrily, Maſter *Talboy*.

*Tal.* More merrily than you will take the finding of her. Ha ha ha—— A *Beggar*! Ha ha ha——

*Cla.* Can I be ſad to finde her, think you?

*Mar.* He thinks you will be diſpleas'd with her, and chide her.

*Cla.* You are deceiv'd, Maſter *Talboy*; you are wide, Maſter *Talboy*. Law and Juſtice ſhall ſleep, and Mirth and good Fellowſhip ride a *Circuit* here to night. A *hay*, Maſter *Oldrents*,

*rents*, a *hay* Maſter *Hearty*, and a *hay* Son *Oliver*, and a *hay* Nephew *Talboy*, that ſhould ha' been, and *hay*, my Cleark *Martin*, and a *hay* for the *Playes*. When come they? Son *Oliver*, ſee for Maſter *Sentwell*, that *Sentwell*, that is no readier with his new Company.

*Tal. Players*! Let us go ſee too. I never ſaw any *Players*.

*Ol.* This is the firſt fit that ever he had of this Diſeaſe. And if it be his laſt, I ſay, as *I* ſaid before. I am his Heire.

*Old.* But is there a *Play* to be expected, and acted by *Beggars*?

*Cla.* That is to ſay, by *Vagabonds*; that is to ſay, by *ſtrowling Players*. They are upon their Purgation. If they can preſent any thing to pleaſe you, they may eſcape the Law; that is (*a hay*) If not, to morrow, Gentlemen, ſhall be acted, *Abuſes ſtript and whipt*, among 'em; with a *hay*, Maſter *Hearty*, you are not merry. *Enter Sentwell.* And a *hay* Maſter *Sentwell*, where are your *Drammatis Perſonæ*; your *Prologus*, and your *Actus Primus*, ha? Ha' they given you the ſlip, for fear of the Whip? A *hay*.

*Sen.* A word aſide, an'c pleaſe you——

Sentwell *takes* Clack *aſide*, *and gives him a Paper.*

*Old.* I have not known a man in ſuch an Humour.

*Hea.* And of his own finding! He ſtole it, indeed, out of his own Bottles, rather than be rob'd of his Liquor. Miſers uſe to tipple themſelves ſo.

*Old.* He do's ſo out-do us, that we look like ſtaid men again, *Hearty*; fine ſober things.

*Hea.* But how long will it laſt? He'll hang himſelf to morrow, for the Coſt we have put him to.

*Old.* I love a Miſer's Feaſt dearly. To ſee how thin and ſcattering the Diſhes ſtood, as if they fear'd quarrelling.

*Hea.* And how the Bottles, to ſcape breaking one another, were brought up by one and once!

*Old.* How one of the Serving-men, untrain'd to wait, ſpilt the White-broth!

*Hea.* And another ſtumbling at the Threſhold, tumbled in

in his Diſh of Rouncevals before him.

*Old.* And moſt ſuitable to the Niggardlineſſe of his Feaſt, we ſhall now have an Entertainment, or *Play*, preſented by *Beggars*.

*Cla.* Send 'em in, Maſter *Sentwell*. *Exit Sent.* Sit Gentlemen, the *Players* are ready to enter. And here's a Bill of their *Playes*. You may take your choyce.

*Old.* Are they ready for them all in the ſame Cloathes? Read 'em, good *Hearty*.

*Hea.* Firſt, here's *The two loſt Daughters*.

*Old.* Put not me in mind of the two loſt Daughters, I prethee. What's the next?

*Hea. The vagrant Steward.*

*Old.* Nor of a vagrant Steward. Sure ſome abuſe is meant me.

*Hea. The old Squire and the Fortune-teller.*

*Old.* That comes nearer me. Away with it.

*Hea. The Beggars Prophecy.*

*Old.* All theſe Titles may ſerve to one *Play*, of a Story that I know too well. I'll ſee none of them.

*Hea.* Then here's *The merry Beggars*.

*Old.* I, that; and let 'em begin

*Enter* Talboy *and* Oliver.

*Tal.* The *Players* are coming in: And Miſtris *Amie* and your man *Martin*, are to be Actors among 'em.

*Cla.* A *hay* then for that too. Some merry device ſure.

*A Flouriſh of Shalms.*

Heark! the *Beggars* Hoboys. Now they begin.

*Old.* See, a moſt ſolemn *Prologue*.

*Enter Poet for Prologue.*

TO Knight, *to* Squire, *and to the* Gentiles *here*,
*We wiſh our* Play *may with content appear.*
*We promiſe you no dainty* Wit *of* Court,
*Nor* City Pageantry, *nor* Country Sport:
*But a plain piece of* Action, *ſhort and ſweet*,
*In Story true. You'll know it when you ſee't*

*Old.* True Stories and true Jeſts do ſeldome thrive on Stages.

*Cla.* They are best to please you with this tho', or a *day* with a Whip for them to morrow.

*Old.* Nay, rather than they shall suffer, I will be pleas'd, let 'em Play their worst.

*A Florish. Enter* Patrico. *With a* Lawyer *habited like* Oldrents.

See our *Patrico* among 'em.

*Hea.* That offered you a *Doxie* in the Barn.

Pat. *Your Children's* Fortunes *I have told,*
*That they shall* Beg *e're they be old.*
*And will you have a Reason why?*
*'Tis Justice in their* Destiny. ——

*Cla. Justice*, ha! Are you meddling with *Justices* already?

Pat. *Your* Grandfather, *by crafty wile*
*Of bargaining, did much beguile*
*A thriftless* Heire *of half the* Lands,
*That are descended to your hands.*
*And, then, by* Law, *not Equity,*
*Forc'd* Him *and his* Posterity,
*To Woe and shamefull Beggary.*

Law. *That was no fault of mine, nor of my Children.*

Pat. *But our fore-fathers Debts and Crimes,*
*Although forborn till future times,*
*Are not so paid. But what needs more,*
*I wish you happy in your* Store. *Exit.*

*Old.* Dost note this, *Hearty?*

*Hea.* You said you would be pleas'd, let 'em play their worst.

Lawyer *walks sadly, beats his breast, &c. To him enter* Souldier *like* Hearty, *and seems to comfort him.*

*Old.* It begins my Story, and by the same *Fortune-teller* that told me my Daughters Fortunes; almost in the same words. I know him now. And he speaks in the *Play* to one that personates me, as neer, as they can set him forth.

*Cla.* How like you it, *Sir*? You seem displeas'd. Shall they

they be whipt yet? A *bay*, if you ſay the word.

*Old.* O, by no means, Sir; I am pleas'd.

Soul. *Sad for the words of a baſe* Fortune-teller? *Believe him! Hang him. I'll truſt none of 'em. They have all* Whims, *and double double meanings In all they ſay.*

*Old.* Whom do's he talk or look like, now?

*Hea.* It is no matter whom. You are pleas'd you ſay.

Soul. *Ha' you no* Sack *i'th Houſe? am not I here? And never without a merry old* Song?

Sing.

*Old* Sack, *and old* Songs, *and a merry old* Crew, *Will fright away Cares when the ground looks blew. And can you think on* Gipſie-Fortune-tellers?

Law. *I'll think as little of 'em as I can.*

Soul. *Will you abroad then? But here comes your Steward.*

*Enter* Springlove *to* Lawyer.

*Old.* Bleſſe me! Is not that *Springlove?*

*Hea.* Is that you, that talks to him, or that Cockſcombe I, do you think? Pray let 'em play their *Play*: the Juſtice will not hinder 'em, you ſee, he's aſleep.

Spr. *Here are the Keyes of all my Charge, Sir. And My humble ſuit is, that you will be pleas'd To let me walk upon my known occaſions, this Sommer.*

Law. *Fie! Canſt not yet leave off thoſe* Vagancies? *But I will ſtrive no more to alter* Nature. *I will not hinder thee, nor bid thee go.*

*Old.* My own very words at his departure.

*Hea.* No matter. Pray attend.

Law. *Come, Friend, I'll take your Councell.*

Exeunt Lawy. Sould.

Spr. *I've ſtriven with my ſelf to alter Nature in me, For my good Maſters ſake; but all in vain; For* Beggars, Cuckoe-like, *fly out again, In their own Notes and Seaſon.*

Enter Rachel, Meriel, Vincent, Hilliard.

Ra. *Our Father's ſadneſſe will not ſuffer us To live in's Houſe.*

Mer. *And we muſt have a Progreſſe.*
Vin. *The aſſurance of your Loves hath engag'd us*
Hil. *To wait on you in any courſe.*
Ra. *Suppoſe wee'll go a begging.*
Vin. Hil. *We are for you.*
Spr. *And that muſt be your Courſe, and ſuddenly,*
*To Cure your Father's ſadneſſe; who is told*
*It is your* Deſtiny: *Which you may quit,*
*By making it a trick of Youth and Wit.*
*I'll ſet you in the way.*
All. 4. *But how? But how?*

*All talk aſide.*

*Old.* My Daughters and their Sweethearts too. I ſee
The ſcope of their *Deſign*; and the whole driſs
Of all their Action now, with joy and comfort.
*Hea.* But take no notice yet. See a *Whim* more of it.
But the mad Rogue that acted me, I muſt make drunk anon.
Spr. *Now! are you all reſolv'd?*
All 4. *Agreed, agreed.*
Spr. *You beg to abſolve your Fortune, not for need* *Exeunt.*
*Old.* I muſt commend their Act in that. Pray thee let's call 'em, and end the matter here. The purpoſe of their *Play*, is but to work my Friendſhip, or their Peace with me; and they have it.
*Hea.* But ſee a little more, Sir.

*Enter Randal.*

*Old.* My Man *Randal* too! Has he a Part with 'em?
*Ran.* They were well ſet a work, when they made me a *Player*. What is that I muſt ſay? And how muſt I act now? Oh! that I muſt be *Steward* for the *Beggars* in Maſter *Steward's* abſence; and tell my Maſter, he's gone to meaſure Land for him to purchaſe.
*Old.* You Sir. Leave the work you can do no better (I can forbear no longer) and call the Actors back again to me.
*Ran.* With all my heart. And glad my part is ſo ſoon done. *Exit.*

*Enter Patrico.*

*Pat.* Since you will then break off our *Play*.
Something in earneſt I muſt ſay;

But

But let affected *Riming* go.
I'll be no more a *Patrico*.
My name is *Wrought-on*——Start not. But (if you
Desire to hear what's worth your best attention,
More privately) you may draw nearer me.

*Oldrents goes to him.*

*Hea.* Hear no more *Fortunes*.

*Old.* You shall give me leave.

*Pat.* I am Grandson to that unhappy *Wrought-on*,
Whom your Grandfather, craftily, wrought out
Of his Estate. By which, all his Posterity
Were, since, expos'd to *Beggary*. I do not charge
You, with the least offence in this. But, now,
Come neerer me: for I must whisper to you.

*Patrico takes Oldrents aside.*

I had a Sister, who among the Race
Of *Beggars*, was the fairest. Fair she was
In *Gentle Blood*, and *Gesture* to her *Beauty*;
Which could not be so clouded with base Cloathing,
But she attracted *Love* from worthy *Persons*;
Which (for her meanness) they expressed in *Pity*,
For the most part. But some assaulted her
With amorous, though loose *desires*; which *she*
Had vertue to withstand. Onely one *Gentleman*
(Whether it were by her *Affection*, or
His *Fat*, to send his Blood a begging with her,
I question not) by her, in heat of Youth,
Did get a *Son*, who now must call you *Father*.

*Old.* Me?

*Pa.* You. Attend me, Sir. Your *Bounty*, then,
Dispos'd your Purse to her; In which, besides
Much Money (I conceive by your neglect)
Was thrown this holy *Relique*. Do you know it?

*Old.* The *Agnus Dei* that my Mother gave me
Upon her Death-bed! O the losse of it
Was my sore grief. And, now, with joy, it is
Restor'd by *Miracle*! Do's your Sister live?

*Pa.* No, Sir. She dyed within a few daies after
Her Son was born; and left him to my care;

On whom, I, to this day, have had an eye,
In all his wandrings.

*Old.* Then the young Man lives!

*Enter Springlove. Vincent. Hilliard. Rachell. Meriel.*

*Pa.* Here with the reſt of your fair *Children*, Sir.

*Old.* My Joy begins to be too great within me!
My Bleſſing and a welcome to you all.
Be one anothers, and you all are mine.

*Vin. Hil.* We are agreed on that.

*Ra.* Long ſince. We only ſtood till you ſhook off your ſadneſſe.

*Mer.* For which we were fain to go a begging, Sir.

*Old.* Now I can read the *Juſtice* of my *Fate*, and yours——

*Cla.* Ha! *Juſtice*? are they handling of *Juſtice*?

*Old.* But more applaud great *Providence* in both.

*Cla.* Are they jeering of *Juſtices*? I watch'd for that.

*Hea.* I ſo me thought. No, Sir. The *Play* is done.

*Enter Sentwell. Amie. Oliver. Martin.*

*Sen.* See, Sir, your *Neece* preſented to you.

*Springlove takes Amie.*

*Cla.* What with a *Speech* by one of the *Players*? *Speak*, Sir? and be not daunted. I am favourable.

*Spr.* Then, by your favour, Sir, this Maiden is my VVife.

*Cla.* Sure you are out o' your part. That is to ſay, you muſt begin again.

*Spr.* She's mine by ſolemn Contract, Sir.

*Cla.* You will not tell me that. Are not you my *Neece*.

*Am.* I dare not, Sir, deny't, we are contracted.

*Cla.* Nay, if we both ſpeak together, how ſhall we hear one another?

*Mar.* I muſt diſprove the Contract.

*Tal.* That is my part to ſpeak.

*Sen.* None can diſprove it. I am witneſſe to it.

*Cla.* Nay, if we all ſpeak —— as *I* ſaid before.

*Old.* Hear me for all then. Here are no *Beggars* (you are but one, *Patrico*) no *Rogues*, nor *Players*: But a ſelect Company,

to

to fill this House with Mirth. These are my *Daughters*; these their *Husbands*; and this that shall marry your *Neece*, a Gentleman, my Son. I will instantly Estate him in a thousand pound a year to entertain his Wife; and to their Heirs for ever. Do you hear me now?

*Cla.* Now *I* do hear you. And I must hear you. That is to say, it is a Match. That is to say —— as *I* said before.

*Tal.* And must I hear it too —— O ——

*Old.* Yes, though you whine your eyes out.

*Hea.* Nephew *Martin*, still the Child with a Suck-bott'e of *Sack*. Peace, Lamb; and I'll find a wife for thee.

*Old.* Now *Patrico*, if you can quit your Function,
To live a moderate Gentleman, I'll give you
A competent Annuity for your life.

*Pat.* I'll be, withall, your faithful Beadf-man; and
Spend my whole life in Prayers for you and yours.

*Cla.* And now, Cleark *Martin*, give all the *Beggars* my free *Passe*, without all manner of Correction; that is to say, with *a hay get 'em gone.*

*Ol.* Are not you the Gentleman, that challeng'd me in right of your Friend here?

*Vin.* Your Inspections good, Sir.

*Ra.* And you the Gentleman (I take it) that would have made *Beggar sport* with us, two at once.

*Mer.* For twelve pence a piece, Sir.

*Ol.* I hope we all are Friends.

*Spr.* Now, on my Duty, Sir, I'll beg no more,
But your continual Love, and dayly Blessing.

*Old.* Except it be at *Court*, Boy; where if ever I come, it shall be to beg the next Fool-Royal's place that falls.

*Spr.* A begging *Epilogue* yet would not be,
Me thinks, improper to this *Comedie*,

Epilogue.

## Epilogue.

*THo' we are now no* Beggars *of the* Crew
*We count it not a ſhame to beg of you.*
*The* Juſtice *here has given his* Paſſe *free*
*To all the reſt, unpuniſh'd; only we*
*Are under Cenſure, till we do obtain*
*Your* Suffrages, *that we may* beg *again,*
*And often, in the Courſe, We took to day,*
*Which was intended for your Mirth, a* Play
*Not without* Action, *and a little* Wit,
*Therefore we* beg *Your* Paſſe *for Us and* It.

FINIS.

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